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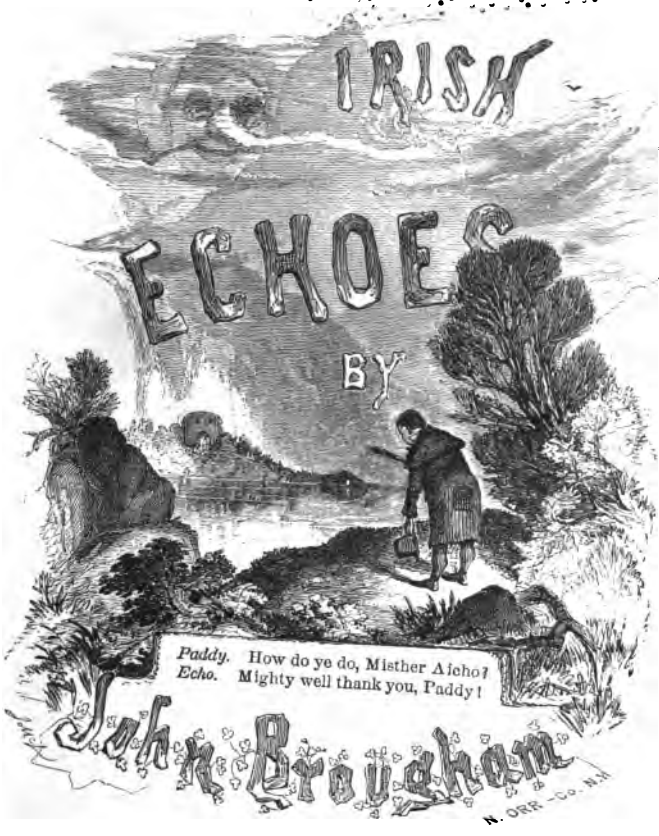
James D. Phelan

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TERRY MAGRA AND THE LEPRECHAUUS.

The Bunsby Papers.



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HUMOROUS STORIES.

UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

BY

JOHN BROUGHAM,

(THE CELEBRATED COMEDIAN.)

With Designs by McLenan.

NEW YORK:
DERBY & JACKSON, 119 NASSAU ST.
1857.

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HELAN

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1856, by

DERBY & JACKSON,

In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States for the Southern District of New York.

W. H. Tinson, Stereotyper. Geo. Russell, Printer. G. W. Alexander, Binder.

TO

SAMUEL LOVER,

The Irish Crichton,

THESE

FAINT ECHOES

OF A

THEME WHICH HE HAS CAUGHT

IN ITS ORIGINAL

PURITY AND STRENGTH

ARE

Affectionately Inscribed,

774173

PREFACE.

PERHAPS the most interesting, if not the most instructive, records of any nation, are its traditions, and legendary tales, and in no part of the world can there be found so varied and whimsical a store, as in Ireland. Every portion of the country; every city, town, and village; nay, almost every family of the "real ould stock" has its representative share in the general fund.

It is a very curious study to trace the analogy between the early mythic stories of all countries, their similarity being strikingly obvious. The great landmarks of actual history are by them vividly defined, and their integrity sustained. As an instance—the universal nature of the mighty deluge which swept the youthful world, finds its record not alone in the annals of that wondrous people, in whose line has descended all we know of learning and religion; but also in the oral traditions and semi-historic accounts of many other nations which have since merged into the stream of chronology.

I mention this particular instance for the purpose of fixing the originality of an early anecdote, very often reproduced and claimed by sundry joke chroniclers, as well as to give the Irish tradition upon the same subject. Here are the words of the veracious historian Leland:

"When Noah was building the ark to preserve himself and his family, one Bith, a man of note and substance—an antideluvian millionaire, no doubt—with his daughter Sesar, applied to the Patriarch for admission, thinking, of course, that all he had to do was to step up to the captain's office, and settle. But Noah denied their request—probably from want of accommodation. On receiving this repulse, Bith collected his family together, and, as the result of their deliberations, they resolved to build a similar vessel for their own private use—a very sensible determination it must be conceded. When the ship was finished, Bith together with his wife, Beatha, his two daughters, Sesar and Barran, with their respective husbands, Ladhra and Fionton, and *fifty* of the most beautiful women—inordinate rascals—that could be induced to venture along with them, took passage therein; but unfortunately, not knowing the exact period when the rain would begin to descend—a diluvian 'Merriam' would have been of great value—they put to sea forty days too soon, and these raw sailors, for want of skill in navigation, were tossed and driven from sea to sea for the space of seven years and a quarter—how they victualled their independent ark the historian deems a matter of no import—at last, however, they landed upon the western coast of Ireland at a place called Dunnamberk, in the barony of Corchadie Ibhne, near about sundown. When they found themselves safely ashore, the three men agreed to divide the fifty women between them. Bith, besides his wife, had seventeen for his share, Fionton had his wife and seventeen more, and Ladhra was satisfied with the sixteen that remained—good easy man."

In justice to our historian it must be admitted that he expresses strong doubts as to the truth of the legend. "It is thought," says he, "to be an unaccountable relatic

whence intelligence could be had of what passed in this island before the flood, is out of my power to conceive. We have, indeed, some ancient manuscripts that give a legendary account of four persons who, they say, lived before and after the deluge, and afterwards divided and possessed themselves of the four parts of the world; but our antiquaries that are best acquainted with the history of Ireland, reject such fables with just indignation. As for such of them who say that Fionton was drowned in the flood, and afterwards came to life and lived long enough to publish the antediluvian history of the island—probably with some enterprising patriarchal "Bunce Brothers"—what can they mean, except to corrupt and perplex the original annals of the country?"—What, indeed, Mr. Leland?

But this, you'll say, has nothing to do with *Irish Echoes*. Well, to be candid, I don't think it has. The fact is, my thoughts took an erratic flight in that direction, and this obedient servant between my thumb and fingers had to accompany them, *nolens volens*.

With regard to the pages which follow, I have endeavored to imbue them more with a Hibernian spirit, than with any attempt at orthographic peculiarity, inasmuch as I consider it but a factitious species of wit which hinges upon an amount of bad spelling. I have, therefore, abstained in a great measure from perverting the language, only doing so where it is absolutely necessary to give individual character.

Some of the sketches are now for the first time presented; others have before appeared, but such as they are, here they are; all I can say in their favor is, that they were drawn from no source but my own invention; could I have done better, be assured I would; and yet, although they are not as perfect as I might wish them to be, still, I am not without

hope, that some amusement, and also—or my arrows have indeed been shot awry—some incentives to a deeper reflection than accompanies the mere story-telling, may be found scattered here and there amongst them.

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DAN DUFF'S WISH,

AND WHAT CAME OF IT.

CHAPTER I.

The burthen wearies him who bears it;
And the shoe pinches him who wears it.

A VERY snug, comfort-suggesting apartment is the parlor of Squire Bulworthy, the rich grazier, upon which you and I, friend reader, are about so unceremoniously to intrude ourselves.

If you will but look around you, you will see that all the appliances of home delectation, procurable in so insignificant a town as Ballinasquash, are here gathered together; that looking-glass is the pride of the domestic circle and the envy of the neighborhood; those easy-chairs look as though tired humanity might find instant relief from their ample plumpness; the side-board, with its

brilliant array of flashing decanters and hospitable-looking glasses, not mean, tailor-souled, thimble-measure aggravators, but huge whisky-punch goblets and wines of capacious magnitude; then the carpet, kidderminster to a certainty, dazzling in the variety of its crimson and blue, and yellow, displaying apochryphal flowers and inexplicable flourishes, such as put to the blush the most profound efforts of unartistic nature.

You must agree with me, taken altogether, that there is an air of supreme content and well-to-do-ableness about the entire surroundings, rendered absolutely certain by the smirking countenance of the Squire himself, as it smiles complacently upon you from that prodigiously-ornamented frame—that jolly red nose is unmistakably indicative of good living—those twinkling eyes display the very fire of self-satisfaction; the town counsellor evidences itself in the-going-to-address-the-meeting attitude, and the man of means flashes from every link of that ponderous watch-chain and coquets amongst those massive seals.

Bulworthy is evidently well off.

"Hallo, what noise is that proceeding from yonder room?"

"Get out, you scoundrel."

It is a fat, gurgling, wheezy kind of voice, Bulworthy's, and speaking sets him coughing an uncomfortable, apoplectic sort of cough, like the sough of wind escaping from a cracked bellows.

"Get out, you vagabone; ugh! ouf!"

A singular-looking man-servant makes a sudden exit

from the room, very evidently hurt, physically, just as an equally singular female domestic enters at the door, having a substantial matutinal repast upon a large-sized tray.

"Keep us from harum," said she, in a delicious Tipperary brogue, soft as honey; "and what's that?"

"Troth, an it's me, Moll, I b'leeve," replied the ejected, lustily rubbing the part affected.

"What's happened, Barney?"

"Oh! it's ould Bulworthy, bad cess to him," said Barney, in an undertone, wincing and twisting from pain; "he's what he calls astonishin' me."

"What for?" inquired Mary, forgetting that she was running considerable risk, from the circumstance of delaying the Squire's breakfast.

"The devil a one ov me knows; whiniver he's crass, he thinks that hittin' me a lick will bring him straight; bedad, if such showers of good luck as he's had all his life drownds a good timper as his is drownded, I hope I may niver be worth a *scurrig* as long as I breathe."

"Indeed, an' I have the same sort of comfort wid the mistress," said Mary. "Haven't I had the heart's blood of an illigant scowldin' jest now, for sugarin' her ladyship's tay wid brown?"

"Why, murther alive, Mollshee, you don't tell me that it's the *lump* she uses?"

"Not a word of a lie in it, nigh hand an ounce of tay in the taypot, too," replied Mary, with a what-do-you-think-of-that expression.

"Faix, I mind the time," said Barney, "when she thought the smell of that same wonst a week was a nosegay.

"Thrue for you, indade, an' not long ago, aither."

Here a sudden thought occurred to the gossipping Hebe.

"Murther alive!" said she, with a start that made the cups rattle; "if I ain't forgettin' ould Bluebeard's breakfast; there'll be wigs on the green, if the could's come at the eggs, for he's mighty perticular entirely."

So saying, she knocked a timid knock at the door of the dreaded Squire's room; a fierce "Come in," followed by the inevitable cough, hurried her into the apartment, from whence she emerged again very shortly, and, with stealthy step and a look more eloquent than words, indicated the state of Bulworthy's temperament.

Just then, there was a quiet little ring at the hall bell. "Run, you divil, run," says Barney. "It kills him intirely to hear that bell goin'; who is it? if you let 'em ring twice, he'll massacree me; oh! it's you, is it?" he continued, as a neat, clean, tidy woman entered the room, holding in her hand a capacious pair of top boots.

It was Mrs. Peggy Duff, the comfortable little wife of Dan Duff, the cobbler. "Save all here," said she, as she came in.

"Amen to that same, includin' yer own purty self, Mrs. Duff," replied Barney, with a touch of comic gallantry.

"Sure, an it's the hoighth of polite you are, Mr. Palthogue," replied Peggy.

"I wish you wouldn't hurt your purty little mouth by

thryin' to squeeze such a big name out of it," said Barney, giving her a knowing squint. "Sure, Barney used to be enough to fill it wonst."

"Ah! but the times is althered now, Mr. Barney," she rejoined; "ould Pether Bulworthy—the saints be good to us, I mean the Squire's mounted sky-high, like a kite, an ov coorse you've gone up with him like the tail."

"But it ain't my nater to forget ould friends for all that, Peg *machree*.

"Sure, an I'm glad to hear that, anyway, for it's mighty few heads that doesn't get dizzy whin they're hoisted up upon a hill of fortune, especially on a suddent like."

Their further conversation was unceremoniously cut short by a roar from Bulworthy's room; now, the Squire's style of using the English language was highly original and somewhat peculiar; with him, the greater the number of syllables, and the more imposing the sound of the sentences, the better were they qualified to make a proper impression upon the *ignobile vulgus*, amongst whom it was his ambition to pass for a "Sir Oracle;" but let him speak for himself. You must imagine each word to be accompanied by that ear-wounding, wheezing cough.

"What horribly atrocious and propinquitous oration is that goin' on out there, eh!"

Barney trembled to the heels of his brogues. "Talk to him, Peg," said he, in an agitated whisper, "while I make meself scarce; don't be afeared," he added, as he stole quietly off. "A woman's voice softens him down like a sun-ray on a snowball."

"Hallo there," shouted the Squire. "Am I obligated to keep continuitously requestin' an elucidation of that rumbunctiousness outside; who's there?"

"If ye plaze sir, it's only me," replied Peggy, "wid ye honor's honorable 'tops' that wanted heel-piecin'."

"Oh! Ah!" wheezed Bulworthy. "Wait, my good woman; I'll finish dressin' with all convaynient circumlocution, and come to you."

"Good woman, indeed," thought Peggy, with a toss of her head and a chirp. "Sure an' there's oil on his tongue sense he's turned Squire," and then, with something akin to envy, she began to scan the various articles of home-ornament scattered about the, to her, magnificent parlor, soliloquizing at the same time. "Look at the chairs, stuffed seats, as I'm a sinner, wid hair, too, I'll be bound. Mahogany tables, if you plaze, all covered over wid useless curiosities an' books that nobody sees the inside ov; did anybody ever see the likes; what's this?" as her eye caught sight of a handsome cologne-bottle. "Madame must have her saints an her sweet wathers, to wash away the smell of the shop, may-be; I remimber the time when they kep' a little bit of a huxtherin' place, and all the parfume they could musther proceeded from the soap and candles, and, may-be, a red herrin' or two to give the rest a flavior."

At this moment the Squire lumbered into the room in all the majesty of a brilliant calico dressing-gown; seating himself grandly in a large arm-chair, and patronizingly waving his hand towards Peggy, in a bland and conde

scending tone of voice, he moderated his impatience down to the true keep-your-distance point.

"Well, ma'm," said he, so you've brought the tops at last, after me waitin' for them a tremenjus course of time; tell that waxy conglomeration of cobblin' connubiality, Mr. Duff, your husband, that, in consequence of his haynious neglect, I have been obligated to annihilate my usual run wid the Ballinasquash hounds. What's the remuneration?"

"If you mane the pay, sir," replied Peg, with a reverence, "it's on'y a shillin'."

"I have no small pecuniation in the way of silver," said Bulworthy, plunging his great fist into his enormous pocket, and rattling several gold pieces about in a most tantalizing manner, a general practice with purse-proud ignorance, adding, with characteristic meanness, "can you change me a sovreign?"

Poor Peggy's face flushed up to the roots of her hair; he knew she couldn't, and she knew he knew so.

"Indeed, sir," said she, "It wouldn't be convaynent just now;" and it was with difficulty she restrained herself from hinting that it was only recently that he himself had the power to put the insolent question.

"Well, then, ma'm," said he, pompously; "all I can say is, that you must pedestrianize in this vicinity on some anterior opportunity; for the present, you can perambulate—to make myself understandable to your limited capacities—walk!"

"Yes sir, thank you, sir," replied Peggy, humbly courte-

sying to the domestic sultan, and only wondering how he *could* keep any teeth in his head, using such hard words.

"Good mornin' to you, Squire," she said, as she retired, "Here's wishin' you safe through the dictionary."

"What does the oleaginous faymale mane; oh! these abominaceous phlebians laugh at me, in spite of all I can do to impress them with the importance of my station; with all the pride of my brick building, I can't altogether root out the recollection of the little grocery; and, indeed, if it comes to that," he continued, with a real sigh, "I used to be a great deal happier when I was scrapin' up money, by weighin' out hay-porths of sustainance to the surroundin' population than I am now, and the advantitious title of Squire tacked on to my cognomination."

His nerves gave a sudden thrill as a shrewish voice from an adjacent room, squealed out, "Are you there, Pether?"

"Yes, my love," he replied, quickly, while, in an undertone, he murmured to himself, "ah! there's a melancholy laceration to my gentility, my *cary spowsy*, I can't instill aristocratical idayas into her deleterious temperature, anyway."

Now, Mrs. Peter Bulworthy deserves a distinctive paragraph, and she shall have it.

Although morally she was Peter's much better half, yet bodily she could aspire to no such appellation. In regard of personal weight, they bore about the same relative affinity as a fine, fat, substantial round of beef would to the carving-fork beside it. The physical difference, however she amply made up for, by keeping her prongs ever actively

employed pricking the unfortunate Peter at every assailable point. Peter was pinguid, plump, and plethoric—she was thin to attenuation. Peter's voice, though husky, was rich and oily—hers was like the attrition of ungreased cart-wheels. Peter affected dignity and social status—she gloried in her unmitigated vulgarity; he, poor man, had long ago given up every idea of resisting her domestic tyranny. "Anything for a quiet life," was his motto, and, with something akin to proper retribution, the indignities and annoyances, which he, in the plenitude of his pocket-power, inflicted upon his poorer neighbors, was repaid tenfold on his devoted head, when he came within the circle of Mrs. Bulworthy's operations.

"I wonder how her temper is this morning," thought Peter, as he cast a furtive glance towards her eyes as she sailed into the room, dressed in—I wish I could describe that walking-dress; all I can say, is, that it looked as if she had laid a wager that she could display in her attire every color in existence, and, won it.

"Well, Pether dear, and how is my ould man to-day?" said she. The Squire released an imprisoned sigh, in gratitude for this manifestation of so unusual a mildness of temper; emboldened thereby to remonstrance, he also ventured to remark:

"I wish, my love, you wouldn't address me by the antiquitous appellation of 'ould man.' It was all very well when we kept a bit of a shop"——

"Oh, now, Pether, you're comin' over me wid your larning," she replied, with a dash of vinegar. "You know

that I never cared a *thranieen* for the likes, nor never wants to make myself out anything but what I am. Not all as one, as some folks I know, that's never happy except they're spittin' out mouthfuls of words big an' hard enough to crack filberts wid. You see I can talliate if I like, Mr. Pether."

"Re-taliate, obscurest of feminines."

"Well, it's all the same, bless my soul, if one only understands what's meant, what does it si'nafy what's said?"

"'Si'nafy,' madame," replied Bulworthy, settling himself into a magisterial position, "do you think that us octogrammarians take no pride in the purity of our entomology, skintax, and progeny. Go an' busy yourself about the futilities of domestic exuberance and leave polite literature to the intellectual sect."

"Meanin' you, I suppose, you concated *omathaun*," said the lady, with a shrug of her pointed shoulders, adding, in a more decided tone, whose effect was instantaneously visible on the countenance, and in the courage of her spouse, "Come, we've had enough of this; put on your boots, an' take me out for a walk."

Just snugly ensconced in his favorite arm-chair, his slippered feet on the cozy fender, and the county paper on his knee as yet unfolded, Peter would have given a great deal to be left in his undisturbed quiet, but one glance at those determined eyes convinced him of the futility of resistance. With a profound groan, he laid down the coveted newspaper, took up his boots, and, without attempting a remonstrance, walked into his bed-room, saying:

"Certainly, dear. I shall prepare my perambulating habiliments directly."

"Pooh, I wish these long words would stick in your throat and choke you some day," screamed his amiable helpmate; but, when he was out of earshot, her face relaxed into a more gentle expression. "Poor Pether," said she, "he wants to stick himself up for a gentleman; now that we've got away from the grocer's shop, he can't bear to hear the sound of the place mentioned, which, as in duty bound I do, twenty times a day; if I didn't keep him in wholesome subjection, he'd get the upper hand of me, as he does with all the rest. Now Pether," she cried, elevating her shrillness into a whistle, "am I goin' to be kept danglin' here all the blessed mornin'?"

"I'm coming, I'm coming, impatient individuality," said Peter, from his room, where, to do him credit, he was hurrying through the unwelcome process with considerable alacrity; "arrah, how do you suppose a gentleman can beatify his external appearance in such a momentous space of time? but, here I am, at your service, ma'am," he continued, as, in all the dignity of snowy shirt-frill, bright blue body-coat, and big brass buttons, white cord breeches, and shiny top-boots, his great bunch of watch-seals bobbing about like the pendulum of a clock, a black thorn stick under his arm, and a wonderfully-furry white hat covering his moon-looking face, he fancied himself the very impersonation of moneyed importance.

"And maybe you'll tell me, ma'am," said he, as he pulled on a pair of big buckskin gloves, "what you want to be

gallivantin' about the streets for at this transitory moment?"

"I choose it," replied the obedient wife. "It's for the benefit of my health, so howld your gab."

"Ah! what unnatural vulgarity."

"If you don't let me be, I'll talk about the shop in the street, loud, so that everybody can hear me."

"I wish to my gracious I had never left it," said he, with a sigh so heavy that it must have carried truth with it.

"Give me your arm, do, and make haste," cried Mrs. Pether, giving a precautionary shake to her numerous, but insufficient flounces. "I'm dyin' to dazzle ould Mrs. Magillicuddy with this bran new shawl."

"Yes," replied Pether, with a glance of resigned conviction, "that's what I thought the benefit to your health would amount to."

So the Squire and his lady—no, I mean Mrs. Peter Bulworthy and her husband—sallied forth, to astonish a few of their neighbors, and amuse a great many more; both Barney, the anomalous man-servant, and Mary, the "maid," pulling up their respective corners of the window-blind to see them, and watch the effect they produced.

"There they go," grunted Barney, with a contemptuous toss of his already scornfully-elevated nose, "the laughin'-stocks of the whole town; dressin' me up this way,"—and he gave his nether extremities a glance of derision—"like an overgrown parrot—me, that niver had anything on me back, but an ould canvas apron, an' a dirty face, now I can't stir out o' the house, that I'm not fairly ashamed o'

meself; there isn't a gossoon in the barony that doesn't know me as well as av I was the town pump, an' I can't show meself in the place, that they don't hunt me about as av I was a wild nagur. Look at them stockin's, Mary, *acush*, there's flimsy, skimpin things, for a cowld Christian to wear on his *games;* I'll be ketchin' me death wid them, I know I will. Mary, I'll be on me oath av I don't think them legs'll carry me off yit."

CHAPTER II.

A true home-angel, in this world of strife,
Is, man's best friend, a faithful, loving wife.

Now turn we, courteous reader, to the contemplation of a totally different scene.

Not far from the imposing, bright, red brick edifice of Squire Bulworthy—indeed, you can see it on the other side of the street, with its flaring green door and great brazen knocker, its crimson parlor curtains and every-color-in-the-world window-shades—stands the miserable looking tenement inhabited by our cobbling friend, Dan Duff. The walls are fashioned out of that natural, but by no means elegant, or expensive compound, known generally as "mud." The roof is thatched with straw, but so old and weather-worn that the rain soaks through it as though it were

sponge; while the accidental vegetable productions which attach themselves to such decaying matter, vainly struggled to give it a semblance of life and verdure. A dilapidated half door, and a poor apology for a window, many of the small panes patched with articles of used up domestic material, were the only means of ingress, ventilation, and light. Notwithstanding the hopeless-looking poverty of the whole, there were one or two indications which, to an observing mind, would tend to lessen, in a remote degree, its general wretchedness. In the first place, a few small, cracked flower-pots decked the little window-sill, from whence crept upward "morning-glories," and bright "scarlet-runners," the delight of industrious poverty. Then there was that invariable sharer of the poor man's crust and companionship, a useless, and not by any means ornamental, cur, shrewd, snappish, and curiously faithful, in friendly contiguity to a well-conditioned cat. You may take your oath that there's harmony beneath the roof where a cat and dog are amicably domiciliated.

With the above exception, the cabin's sole occupant, at the present moment, is a woman; but such a woman—it's the cobbler's wife, before-mentioned; here, however, she is in her peculiar sphere. "Home is home, be it ever so homely," is a trite and true aphorism, and poor Peggy, it is evident, does her best to make this unpromising one as full of comfort as she can. Everything is scrupulously clean and in its place. The little wooden dresser is as white as soap and sand can make it. So is the floor, and so are the scanty household goods.

There is, though, a shade of discomfort on Peggy's pretty face just now, as she laboriously plies her knitting needles, and the small thundercloud breaks out into little flashes of impatience, as she soliloquizes:

"Did anybody ever see the likes of that Dan of mine? He couldn't take the "tops" over to ould Bulworthy himself—not he!—of course not—he wasn't well enough to go out *then*, but the minute my back was turned, away he cuts to the '*shebeen*' house to get his 'mornin''— ugh! I do believe if he was before me now, I'd—but no—my poor Dan, it ain't much comfort he's got in the world; so I won't say a blessed word to worry him."

As if to recompense the considerate thought, Dan's jolly voice was heard, singing one of his consoling ditties.

"Here he comes, bless him," cried Peg, joyfully, "as lively as a lark."

There was wonderful commotion amongst the animals as Dan entered. "Pincher," the apocryphal, shook his apology for a tail as vigorously as that diminished appendage was capable of accomplishing; while "Pussy" urged her claims upon his attention by rubbing herself against his legs. Peg said nothing.

Now, Dan perfectly well knew his delinquency. Indeed, the song he had just executed, in a good, bold voice, had more of "brag" in it than real enthusiasm. He saw how the land lay instantly.

"Peg, *alanna machree*, here I am," said he. "Whisht! I know what you're goin' to say. Keep yer mouth shut, you hateful blaggard, or I'll stop it up wid kisses, as close

as cobbler's wax. There, Peg," he continued, after having suited the action to the word, with a smack like a carter's whip, "I couldn't help it—I couldn't, upon my word. You were a long time away—and the breakfast was mighty small—and—and—a sort of oneasiness kem over me inside, I was lonesome, and thinkin' of things as wasn't wholesome, so I thought I'd just stick another chalk up at Phil Mooney's, so don't say another word."

"Not a word Dan," replied Peg. "Sure, don't I mind poor Mary Maguire's case, how she never let Mike rest when he had 'the drop' in him, until at long last he stayed out, for the fear of comin' home; the whisky is too strong for a woman to fight agin, Dan, so, if you like it better than me"—

That was a skillful side-blow, and it made its mark.

"Peg, you know better, you thief of the world, you do; you know, in your pure little heart, that's too good for me, or the likes of me; that the summer flowers doesn't love the sunshine of heaven better than I love you; oh! no, it isn't that, not that, Peg *aroon*."

"What is it, then?"

"Well, Peg," he continued, "its the *thinks* that comes over a poor fella when he hasn't a *scurrig* to bless himself wid; the *thinks* that lays a howld of him when there's nobody by but himself and the devil that sends them, thems the times that worries a *poor* man, Peg."

"Ah! Dan," replied the other, seriously, "but those times worry a *wicked* man worse."

"Well, may-be they do," said the cobbler, doggedly,

"if a body knew the truth, but it's bad enough either way. Did the Squire pay for the 'tops?'"

"Not yet, Dan, he hadn't the change!"

"Hadn't he, really," replied the other, bitterly. "Poor fella, what a pity; there's a mighty great likeness betune us in that, anyway. The upstart pup, why the divil didn't he get change. There's the differ, Peg, darlin', betune the rale gintleman and the 'musharoon;' a gintleman as feels and knows he's one, and consequentially acts accordin', will always think of the *great* inconvanience the want of the little bit o' money is to the poor man, and not the small ditto to himself, in the respect of gettin' the change; back luck attend you, ould Bulworthy, the want of that shillin' has made me break my word in a quarther where I'm mighty loath for to do that same."

"Where is that, Dan?"

"I'll tell you, Peg; on the strength of that shillin' I towld my inside that I'd give it a threat, may I never sin, acush, if I didn't promise it a 'sassidge;' now, you know if you tell your hungryness to come at a certain time, it's generally apt to be purty smart at keepin' the appintmint, and, bedad, mine is waitin' for that sassidge; moreover, it ain't threatin' a man's intayrior relations anyway raysonable to go back of yer word. Murdher, there's a twinge—if it isn't hittin' me a punch in the stomach just to put me in mind, I'm a grasshopper. It's no use," he continued, addressing his unsatisfied digestibles, "you may's well give over grumblin' and touchin' me up that way; it's no fault of mine, it's ould Bulworthy's, bad cess to him; he hadn't

any change, the dirty *spalpeen*. you won't take an excuse won't you? then I'll have to fire a pipe at you. Peg, jewil, fill us a *dhudeen*, won't you; this thievin' hunger won't stir a toe unless I hunt it out wid tibaccy."

Peggy soon filled the inevitable pipe, and Dan brought his artillery to bear upon the foe, after a severe round of tremendous puffs, during which the combatants were enveloped in the hot smoke of battle; the enemy showed evident signs of beating a temporary retreat. Dan threw himself back in his chair, and prepared, leisurely, to enjoy the fruits of his victory.

"I wondher," said he, after a few moments of great satisfaction, "I wondher how ould Bulworthy would like to lunch upon smoke? Be jabers, if I had my will, I'd make him eat three males a day of it, until his hard-hearted bowels got tenderer towards the poor."

"Talk of the what's-his-name," said Peggy. "Here he comes, both him and his fine madame, as proud as ten paycocks; look at the airs of them; I wonder they don't have the street widened when they condescend to walk out."

"Peggy, darlin'," said Dan, "divil take me if I havn't a great mind to let out at him for my shillin'."

Sure you wouldn't; what, in the open street? he'd hang you, Dan, without judge or jury."

"It ain't quite so easy to hang a man as it used to be in the fine ould times, Peg *alanna*," said Dan. "It's my shillin', he has no right to keep it jinglin' in his pocket, and he shan't, neither, if I can help it," he continued,

going towards the door. "Hit or miss, here goes: Hollo, Squire!" adding, *sotto voce*, "you murdherin' Turk in top boots; long life to you—you concated ould vagabone."

These expressions, of which the most polite alone reached his ear, as it may be imagined, grated harshly upon the aristocratic nerves of the prodigious Bulworthy: "What's that fellow making such a magniloquent hulla-balloo about," said he, grandly.

"Athin, may-be you'd do my drawin'-room the honor of a sit down, yourself, and her ladyship," said Dan, to the dismay of poor Peggy, who exclaimed: "Don't, Dan, don't; I'm ashamed of you, indeed, I am;" adding, apologetically, "oh, he never would a done it, only for the drink; we're ruined entirely."

"Bad 'cess to me if they're not coming, sure enough," said Dan, somewhat tremulously, but determined to put a good bold face on it, he continued, as they entered, "come, Peg, dust the chair for the lady."

Peg's face was crimson as she complied, she scarcely knew how; Bulworthy's countenance indicated the state of temper with which he accepted the proffered hospitality, while the Squiress gazed coolly and patronizingly around.

"I'm in a tremendious rage," said he, as he shook his his fist at Dan. "How dare you have the premeditated insurance to arrogate us into your pig-sty, you ragamuffin."

"Don't worrit, my dear," interposed Mrs. Bulworthy, in an authoritative tone. "It's our dooty, now, as ladies and gentlemen, to inquire into the condition of the poor,

and give them wholesome advice. Here, my dear," she continued, taking sundry tracts from her capacious pocket, "read these comfortable pages, and see what a state of awful responsibility you are in."

"Bedad, that's all the poor people is likely to get from such visitors as you," said Dan.

"And now, sir," said Bulworthy, with an imposing frown, "what interrogational imperence do you want to address to me, that you have the owdaciousness to drag me here?"

Dan simply took down a broken piece of slate, and holding it up before the Squire's eyes, "a thriflin' account, sir," said he, "for heel-piecin' your honor's honorable tops, and maybe they don't show off an iligant lump of a leg, this fine spring mornin'," vainly hoping that the unmitigated flattery would mitigate the wrath of the potent Squire.

"And was it for this, you—you illiterate colossus of brass, that you detained me in my preambulations."

"Indeed, sir," timidly interposed Peggy, "I hope that you'll forgive him. It isn't his fault entirely, your honor. It's all on account of a gintleman that he axed for to take a bit of dinner wid him."

"What!" screamed Mrs. Bulworthy, with her sanctimonious eyes elevated to the true Pharisaic standard; "I never heard of such wretched depravity. Dinner! do such wretched creatures deal in so miserable an extravagance? I tremble for your lost condition. Read this;" and she fumbled in her pocket for another comforting document, which Peggy courtesied humbly as she received; "read this, and learn to conquer your unworthy appetites for

earthly things." The Squiress was a fine example of those theoretic Lady Bountifuls, whose province it is to feed poverty with such like unsatisfactory viands.

"I'll make you wait for your shillin', you scoundrel," said the irate Squire.

"And serve him right, too," echoed his worthy spouse.

"Then we'll have to wait for our dinner," suggested Dan.

"And what's that to us, you reprobate?"

"Oh, nothin'," said Dan. "Full stomachs thinks there's no empty ones in the world; but may bad fortune stuff them top-boots chock full of corns, for your hard-heartedness, and may you never pull them off without gettin' a fresh stock."

"Dear me, dear me," said the squeaking tract-distributer, "read this, and see what comes of such irreligious observations."

"Read it yourself, ma'am," replied Dan, tossing back the proffered antidote, "maybe you may want it as bad as any of us."

"You have been iniquitously indulging in intoxicating beverages, sir," said Bulworthy.

"A drunkard!" exclaimed his helpmate. "I have a blessed tract or two peculiarly adapted to that abominable crime."

"Oh! no, no, not a drunkard," cried Peggy, snatching the tract from the hand of her visitor; "not a drunkard. The cares of poverty force him to try and forget them, and himself now and then, but that's all."

"All! that all! Oh, for the sinfulness that surrounds us," replied the other.

"Have you been drinking, sir?" demanded the Squire, in a justice-of-peace tone.

"What right have you to ax?" said Dan, boldly. "You owe me a shillin'; that's all I want."

"He has a right, depraved creature that you are," interposed the meek and Christian-like disseminator; "rich people always have a right to ask such questions of their poorer neighbors; but you don't deserve the care we take of your unhappy souls."

"Well, then, since it comes to that," said Dan, "I *do* taste a thrifle whin I can convayniently lay a hould of it; and, more betoken, it's a mighty bad rule that doesn't work both ways. I saw a lot of barrels and bottles goin' into the fine house over the way. I wonder if they wor intended for chimbly ornaments?"

"Come, my dear," said Bulworthy, now supremely indignant, "let us leave these degenerations individuals to their incoherent reflections."

"I want my shillin'," shouted Dan.

"You shan't have it."

"But I'm hungry, and so is Peggy, and Pincher, and Pussy."

"Read this, you poor, infatuated sinner," said Mrs. B., handing him another elegant extract, "and it will teach you to be contented under all circumstances."

"'Will it turn into a piece of bacon?" inquired Dan; "for if it won't yez may curl yur hair wid it. It's all verv

well for you barn-fed gentry to be crammin' the poor wid bits of paper—gim me me shillin'."

The Squire said not a word, but buttoned his pockets up tightly, while, with an expression of the most intense pity for such unparalleled ignorance, his better half followed him out of the cabin.

"May bitther bad luck attend yez both," said Dan, as they quitted the place. "The dirty dhrop's in yez, and it *will* show itself in spite of all yer money; hollo! ain't that the babby?" he continued, as the tiny voice of a child was heard proceeding from a little bit of a room, their only other apartment.

"Yes, bless his bright eyes," replied Peggy, oblivious now to all the world beside. "He's awake; look at his darlin' little face, wid the laugh comin' all over it like a mealy potato." So saying, she rushed into the room, and commenced hugging and kissing their sole treasure in a most alarming manner.

"Kiss him for me, Peg," cried Dan. "Smother the villain of the world; ah, ha!" he went on, "there's a blessin' ould top-boots hasn't got any way; a fine lump of a fella, wid the health fairly burstin' out of his murdherin' cheeks; as fat as butther, and as lively as a tickled kitten. The Squire's is a poor, wizen-faced *leprechaun* of a creather, that looks as if he was born forty years ould, and grew backwards ever sence. Ha, ha! the thoughts of that bright-eyed schamer puts the song into my heart, like the risin' sun to the lark."

But soon his thoughts took a more desponding turn.

"Poor little gossoon," said he, "when I think that there's nothin' before him but his father's luck in the world, to work, and pine, and toil, until his back is bent before the ould age touches it; it drives away the joy as quick as it came; murdher alive, ain't it too bad to think that ill-lookin' *Kippogue* over the way, might ate goold if he could only disgist it, and when he grows up, my fine, noble, blessed boy will have to bow, and cringe, and touch his hat to a chap wid no more sowl than a worn-out shoe; that's what puts evil thoughts in my head; the boy that I love, aye! almost as hard as if I was the mother of it, instead of bein' only its father; when I think of him and what may be before him, oh! how I wish that I stood in ould Bulworthy's shoes, or his 'tops,' if it was only for his sake. Murdher! how sleepy I am all of a suddent; is it the drink, or the imptyness? a little of both, may-be; it ain't often I have a chance of forgettin' the dirty world for a thrifle o' time, so here goes to have a snooze.

So saying, Dan settled himself to take a mid-day nap, for the lack of better employment; but he had scarcely dropped his head on his breast for that purpose when he became aware of a singular ringing sensation in his ears, which increased until he fancied he heard a sound, loud and sonorous as the tolling of the church-clock; at last there came one bang, so startling that he jumped up suddenly from his chair: "The Saints between us and all harum: who's that?" he cried, in a terrible fright; but he could see nothing; the sounds were also gone; a dead silence was around him, and he must have slept for some

time, it appeared, for the shadows of evening were darkening the small window. Moodily he leant his head upon his hands and gazed into the small fire-place; a few sods of turf were burning on the hearth; as he looked fixedly upon the waning embers, he perceived that from either end of one of the sods, a thin, white smoke lazily curled up the chimney, gradually increasing in volume and density; while he was vainly wondering how so small a piece of turf could send out so great an amount of vapor, to his still greater surprise, he saw the spiral columns advance towards him, and gather upon each side—slowly they gathered—and mounted in eddying clouds, until they reached to a level with his head; there they ceased, as though imprisoned in an invisible medium, and commenced wreathing and interwreathing, up and down, in beautiful vapory combinations; silently he contemplated the extraordinary phenomenon, in a state of extreme bewilderment, but yet without the slightest sensation of the dread which should accompany so singular a spectacle, and it was with more admiration than awe he became aware that the smoky pillars beside him were gradually moulding themselves into the most exquisite human forms; at length they stood before him defined and perfect—two female appearances of transcendent loveliness; one fair as a sunbeam, the other dark, but each supreme in its individual type of beauty. Gentleness and heavenly love beamed in the mild, blue eyes of the one, glittering boldness flashed from the coal-black orbs of the other: a shower of delicate golden hair, soft and yielding as silken fibres, shed a

bright radiance like a halo around the saintly lineaments of the fairer spirit, while massy clusters of raven hue, through which a warm, purple tint was interwoven, glancing, in the light, like threads of fire, enriched the ample brow, and swept down the full form of the darker one. "I wonder if it's alive they are," thought Dan, as he gazed alternately at each. "I'll be upon me oath I dunno which is the purtiest of the two; the yalla-headed one looks as if she could coax the very heart out through me ribs; but, oh! murdher alive! the lightnin' that darts from them black eyes is enough to strike a fella foolish at onst; bad luck to me if I don't spake to them;" so saying, our friend made one of his best bows, tugging the conventional lock left for that purpose. "Your sarvant, ladies," said he, "and what might it be that brings yez out so airly this cowld mornin'."

The fairer apparition, in a voice like spoken melody, answered: "I am the spirit of your better thoughts."

"You don't tell me that, Miss, then it's glad that I am to see you to the fore, and mighty sorry that I haven't got a sate dacent enough to offer to the likes of such an iligant creather," said Dan, "and who's your frind, may I ax?" he went on, turning to the darker beauty.

"I am the spirit of your evil thoughts," replied the other, in a rich, full tone, bending her lustrous eyes upon the questioner in a way that made his heart bound.

"Oh! you are, are you," he gasped out; "faix, and I don't know, if it's welcome you ought to be, or not; but, for the sake of good manners, I'd ax you to sit too, av I had the convaynience."

"You called upon us both, just now," said the good spirit.

"And we are here," continued the other; "so choose between us, which you will entertain."

"Couldn't I be on the safe side, and entertain the both of yez?" suggested Dan, with a propitiatory wink to each.

"That is impossible," replied the good spirit. "We only meet when there's contention in a mortal mind whether he shall the right or wrong pursue. Did you not wish but now that you could change conditions with the rich man opposite?"

"Well, then, I may's well let the whole truth out, seein' that you're likely to know all about it; I *did* wish somethin' of the sort."

"And a very reasonable wish it was," said the dark spirit, on his left.

"A very foolish wish," firmly observed the fair one.

"I don't agree with you," replied the other.

"You never do," said the good spirit.

"Nor ever will!"

"I don't lose much by that" ——

"Ladies, darlin'," interposed Dan, "I'd rayther you wouldn't disthress yerselves on my account."

"Don't be alarmed, my good friend," said the fair spirit. "We never can agree; but, how do you resolve? Is it still your wish to stand in the Squire's shoes?"

"Top-boots?" suggested Dan.

"Of course it is," replied the evil spirit for him. "Who

would not have such wish, to pass his days in luxury and ease, not labor—pinched, in care and penury ?"

"Thrue for you," observed Dan, approvingly.

"But who would give up even a small share of joy, contentment, and domestic love, to seek, perchance, for more, perchance, for less ?" replied the other.

"There's rayson in that," said Dan.

"Aye, but the boy," said his left-hand companion; "see what a glorious life the heir to such a wealthy man would lead."

"That sets me heart bubblin' like a bilin' pot," cried Dan, joyously.

"You are resolved, then, to be ruled by me ?" demanded the suggester of evil thoughts.

"Indeed, and I am, that I am, just for the sake of the babby," said Dan.

"Follow, and I will point out a way," said the dark spirit, gliding towards the door. Dan made a movement to follow, when his footsteps were arrested by a chorus of invisible voices, small, but distinct, and musical as a choir of singing birds, that appeared to sound within his very brain, so that he heard every word as clearly as though he had uttered it himself.

Every mortal has his grief:
Each one thinks that his is chief.
Better keep your present lot,
Than to tempt—you don't know what.

Irresolution made him falter on the threshold through which the spirit of evil thoughts had just passed; it was

but for an instant, however, for the same tiny voices sang within his heart the blessings and the joys of wealth, and, above all, the image of his darling child, made happy in its possession.

"Here goes," said he. "The divil a pin's point does it matther what comes of me, so that luck lays a howld of the little gossoon." So saying, he followed the dark spirit, while the other bowed its lovely head upon its breast, and shedding tears of anguish for the tempted one, whose weakness she had not the power to strengthen, slowly and pensively came after, resolved not to abandon her charge while there was yet a hope to save.

CHAPTER III.

Our selfish pleasures multiply amain,
But then their countless progeny is pain.

We left the great Squire Bulworthy, preparing to astonish the neighborhood, which he assuredly succeeded in doing, but not in a style at all creditable or satisfactory to himself.

It would appear, indeed, as though the hearty, but uncharitable wish of the irritated cobbler, was curiously prophetic, for, before the purse-proud couple had achieved the half of their accustomed promenade, Mr. Bulworthy's extremities were suddenly and unceremoniously fastened

upon by an unusually severe gripe of that enemy to active exercise—the gout. So sharp was the pain, that the Squire roared out right lustily, and executed such a variety of absurd contortions that he became an object of intense amusement, rather than sympathy, to the vagabond portion of the neighborhood.

There being no such extemporaneous means of transit as hacks, or "hansoms," attainable, there was nothing for it but to suffer; so, leaning heavily upon a couple of stray Samaritans, whose commiseration was warmly stimulated by the promised shilling, he managed, by slow and agonizing efforts, to shuffle home, attended by his silent and unsympathizing spouse.

After having undergone the excruciating process of unbooting—an operation whose exquisite sensations are known only to the initiated—he screamed for his universal panacea, whisky-punch. The materials were brought in an incredibly short space of time, for Bulworthy was murderous in his gouty spells. Half a dozen stiff tumblers were disposed of with Hibernian celerity, and the hurried household began to congratulate itself upon a prospect of quiet. Vain hope! "dingle, dingle, ding!" went the big bell at the Squire's elbow. Up started, simultaneously, Barney and Mary from the dish of comfort they were laying themselves out to indulge in down stairs—in their eagerness, tumbling into each other's arms. Barney rushed up the stairway, while Mary listened—as Marys always do, when there's anything interesting going on—receiving, however, in this instance, ample reward for such a breach of good

manners, being nearly prostrated by a book flung at Barney's head, to hasten his exit, by the suffering Squire. What the missile had only half done, Barney finished; for, taking the kitchen-stairs at a slide, he came plump against the partially-stunned listener, and down they both rolled comfortably to the bottom. However, as there were no bones broken, the only damage being what Mary called, "a dent in her head," they soon picked themselves up again.

"Well," says Mary, "how is he now?"

"Oh, murdher alive, don't ax me," replied Barney, rubbing his bruises, "it's my belief that there never was sich a cantankerous ould chicken sence the world was hatched. It's a composin' draft that he's schreechin' for now, as av a gallion of punch, strong enough to slide on, wasn't composin'."

In due time, he had his "composin' draft," which, as it contained a pretty considerable dose of laudanum, sufficed, together with his other potations, to lull the pain somewhat, and give him comparative quiet; this was a famous opportunity for Mrs. Bulworthy, who immediately proceeded to "improve" it.

"Now, Pether, dear," said she, with an attempt to modulate her saw-cutting voice into something approaching to tenderness, which was a failure. "Oh! think upon the situation of your soul, and look over one of these comforting works."

Peter groaned inwardly, but said nothing.

"Grace," she went on, "is never denied, even to the most hardenedest sinner."

Peter threw his head back and closed his eyes, in the forlorn hope that she would respect his simulated slumber; but she was not a woman to respect anything, when her "vocation" was strong on her.

"It's criminal in you, Peter," she shouted, "to neglect your spiritual state; suppose you were to die, and it's my belief you will, for you're looking dreadful, what a misery it would be to me; I'd never forgive myself; oh! Pether, Pether, do read this true and beautiful description of the place of torment you're a blindly plunging your sowl into."

This was too much for the already tortured sinner. "Get out!" he roared. "Don't bother; there's a time for all things, you indiscreet and unnatural apostle of discomfortableness, what do you worry me for now, when you see me enjoyin' such a multiplication of bodily sufferings?"

"'Because," said she, coolly; "it's the only time that I can hope to make an impression upon your hardened heart; it's my duty, not only as your wife, but as a member of the society for the evangelizing the home heathen; of which heathen, my dear, I have the word of my pious associates, you are an outrageous example; therefore, it is my mission to do all I can to bring about your regeneration."

"Murdher, murdher! if I could only use my feet," groaned Bulworthy, with the suppressed anger boiling in his face.

"Ah? but you can't," replied the home comfort, as she quietly removed everything portable from within the reach of the sufferer's arm, and settling herself in rigid implacability, prepared to do battle with the evil one.

"Since you won't use your bodily senses for your soul's advantage," said she, solemnly, "I will, myself, peruse these pages of admonition."

Now, there cannot be a doubt but that the work Mrs. Bulworthy prepared to read, was an excellent one, written by an excellent person, and distributed for a most excellent purpose; but, to say the least, it was very injudicious in the absorbingly-pious lady to exhibit so much concern for the immortal part of poor Bulworthy, altogether overlooking the mortal anguish he was at the present moment enduring.

At all events, *he* thought so, for, what with the pain and the rage, he commenced a series of bellowings, in the expectation that his other tormentor would be recalled to the necessity of directing her mind from the future, to the suffering before her; but, no, not a bit of it; the louder he roared, the shriller she read, being a contest, as she imagined, between the fierce obstinacy of the demon within him, and the efficacy of her ministration; on she went, inflexibly, in the prolonged cadence of the conventicle, never ceasing or averting her strong eye from the tract, until she had finished its perusal. Not a word of it did he, *would* he hear, for, with yelling occasionally, and stopping his ears at intervals, the blessed communication might have been written in its original Sanscrit, for all the good it did him.

However, she had done her duty, and was satisfied. "Temper, temper, Pether," she ejaculated, as he heaved a groan of impatience from one of the twinges. "Suffer

patiently; it is good for the flesh to be mortified; think of the worse that is to come."

"Oh! you're a comforter if ever there was one," sighed the Squire. "How the mischief can I be patient with a coal of fire on every toe of me? It's mighty aisy for thim that doesn't feel it to keep gabblin' about patience. I'll roar if I like; it does me good to swear at the murdherin' thing, and I will, too."

Whereupon, he let fly a volley of epithets, not the very choicest in the vernacular, which had at least one good effect, for it sent the domestic missionary flying out of the room, tracts and all, utterly horrified at the outburst of impiety; he firing a parting shot or two after her, loaded with purely personal charges of not over complimentary character.

It was just at this moment that his opposite neighbor, the poor cobbler, having arrived at the most comforting part of his reflections, was indulging in one of his jolliest songs, the merry sound of which penetrated to the apartment of the suffering rich man, filling his heart with envy.

"Listen to that," he grunted, swaying backward and forward from the intensity of the pain. "What's the use av all my money; there's that blaggard cobbler, without a rap to bless himself with, and the song's never out of his vagabone throat; oh, murdher! if I wouldn't give every shillin' that I'm worth in the world to change conditions with the chirpin' schemer."

In a short time, however, the composing drafts, spirituous

and otherwise, began to do their work; a drowsy sensation crept over him, and he dropped into an unquiet slumber.

When he awoke again, which was instantly, as he thought, what was his surprise to behold an extraordinary-looking sprite riding upon his worst foot. The thing was dressed like a jockey, cap, jacket, breeches, and boots, the latter being furnished with a pair of needles instead of spurs; but with such a comical face that Bulworthy would have laughed heartily at its funny expression, except that the sight of those ominous goads effectually checked all thoughts of risibility.

"Who the devil are you? Get off o' my toe, you impudent little scoundrel," said the Squire, "or I'll fling a pill-box at you."

"Bless you, that would be no use," piped the diminutive jock, settling himself in his saddle.

"Move, I say, or bang goes this bottle of doctor's stuff right in yer eye."

"Fire away," says the imp, with a little bit of a laugh, like the squeak of a mouse, "I don't fear any of your doctor's bedevilment."

"What brings you here, anyway?" demanded Bulworthy. He was now out of pain, and consequently waxing arrogant.

"You," squeaked the little rider.

"It's a lie. I never invited you."

"Oh, yes, you did, and moreover, I must say, treated me like a prince; boarded and lodged me gloriously."

"Pooh! you're a fool. Where did I lodge you?"

"Here, in your foot," said the little devil, with a grin, accompanying the observation with the slightest touch of the needle; enough, however, to extort a yell from the Squire. "What do you think of that, my hero?" the jockey continued. "It will be better for you to keep a civil tongue in that foolish head of yours."

"Oh, I will! I will!" groaned Bulworthy. "If you'll only obleege me by dismountin', I'll promise anything."

"Oh, yes, that's mighty likely," said the imp, "after being asked here to amuse myself. A pretty sort of a host you are."

"If you'll believe me, there's some mistake, sir, indeed there is," said Bulworthy, apologetically, "I don't remember ever havin' had the honor of your acquaintance."

"You don't, don't you; then, here goes, to put you in mind, you forgetful old savage;" with that, he commenced a series of equestrian manœuvres with the Squire's intractable toe, now sawing with the diminutive chifney bit, now tickling the sides with a slender, but very cutting kind of a whip, finishing up his exercises by plunging both spurs into the flesh, making the tortured limb jump like a Galway hunter over a stone wall.

"Stop! stop!" roared the sufferer, while the perspiration rained from his forehead like a shower-bath.

"You know me now, do you, eh?"

"Yes, yes," gasped the Squire. "I'll never forget you again—never, never!"

"Will you be civil?"—a slight touch of the needle.

"Oh, murdher! yes."

"And temperate?"—another small puncture.

"I will, I will."

"Very well, then. I'll not only dismount, as I'm a little tired, but I'll give you a word or two of good advice." So saying, the little jockey got out of his seat, put his saddle on his shoulders, and having with great difficulty clambered up the flannel precipice of Bulworthy's leg, managed, with the assistance of his waistcoat buttons, to mount upon the table, where, sitting down upon a pill-box, he crossed his legs, and leisurely switching his top-boots, regarded the Squire with a look of intense cunning.

"Well, only to think," said Bulworthy to himself, "that such a weeny thing as that could give a man such a heap of oneasiness; a fella that I could smash with my fist as I would a fly: may I never get up from this if I don't do it, and then may-be I'll get rid of the murdherin' torment altogether."

With that, he suddenly brought his great hand down on the table with a bang that, as he supposed, exterminated jockey, pill-box, and all.

"Ha, ha!" he roared, "there's an end to you, my fine fella."

"Not a bit of it," squealed the little ruffian; "what do you say to this?" he continued, as he flourished one of the top-boots over his head, and buried the spur through the Squire's finger, fastening it firmly to the table. "See what you got for your wicked intentions, and that ain't the worst of it neither, for I'm going to serve that elegant big

thumb of yours the same way. But I'll take my time about it, for there's no fear of your hands ever stirring from that spot until I like." So saying, the tantalizing fiend made several fierce attempts to transfix the doomed member, each time just grazing the skin with the sharp needle. At last he drove it right up to the heel, and there the two boots stuck, while the little blackguard danced the "Foxhunter's jig," in his stocking-feet, cutting pigeon-wings among the pill-boxes, like a professor.

Bulworthy now roared louder than ever, vainly endeavoring to free his tortured hand from its strange imprisonment, and the more he roared, the more his tormentor grinned, and cut capers about the table.

"Oh, pull out them thunderin' spurs," cried he, in agony. "This is worse than all; mercy, mercy! Misther jockey, I beg your pardon for what I did; it was the drink; there's whisky in me."

"I know that well enough," chirped the grinning imp. "If there wasn't, I couldn't have the power over you that you see."

"Oh, won't you look over it this once? I'll be on me Bible oath I won't offend you again."

"Are you in earnest this time?"

"Bad luck attend me if I'm not."

"Well, then, I'll trust you, though you don't deserve it," replied the little schemer, and, after two or three tugs, he succeeded in pulling out one of the spurs. "Do you feel easier?" inquired he, with a grin.

"It's like getting half-way out of purgatory," said the

Squire, with a sigh of relief. "There's a fine fella, lug out the other, won't you?"

"I must make some conditions first."

"Let them be short, for gracious sake!"

"First and foremost, are you going to be quiet and reasonable?"

"I am, I am!"

"Secondly, are you going to pay me for the trouble I've had?"

"Whatever you ask, only be quick about it."

"It won't tax you much, you have only to make over to me all the bottles and jars you have in the house."

"Take them, and welcome."

"If you'll promise me not to meddle with them, I'll leave them in your keeping, only they're mine, remember."

"Every drop," cried the Squire, eagerly. "I won't touch another mouthful."

"That's all right; you keep your word and I'll keep mine; there, you may have the use of your fist once more," he continued, as he plucked out the other spur, giving the released hand a parting kick that thrilled through every joint.

"And now," said he, as he pulled on his tiny boots, "I have a word or two more to say to you; you made a foolish wish just now; that you'd like to change places with that miserable cobbler over the way; are you still of the same way of thinking?"

"Should I have your companionship there," inquired Bulworthy.

"Certainly not; he couldn't afford to keep me," replied the gout-fiend, contemptuously.

"Then, without meanin' the slightest offence to you, my little friend," said the other, "it wouldn't grieve me much to get rid of your acquaintance at any sacrifice, even to the disgust of walking into that rascally cobbler's shoes. I'm only afraid that, clever as you are, you can't manage that for me."

"Don't be quite so sure," replied the little jockey, with a knowing wink, amusing himself by every now and then tickling up Bulworthy's fingers with his sharp whip, every stroke of which seemed to cut him to the marrow. "Who can tell but that the poor, ignorant devil would like to change places with *you;* if so, I can do the job for ye both in a jiffey: more, betoken, here he comes, so that we can settle the affair at once."

At that instant, the door of Bulworthy's apartment flew open, as from the effect of a sudden and strong gust of wind, while he, although seeing nothing, distinctly heard a slight rustling, and felt that peculiar sensation one receives at the entrance of persons into a room while not looking in their direction.

"I see no one," said the Squire; "'twas but a blast of wind."

"*I* do," curtly replied the little jockey, and then proceeded to hold an interesting confidential chat with the invisibilities; in a few moments, Bulworthy distinguished the jolly voice of Dan, the cobbler, a little jollier than usual; indicating the high state of his spiritual tempera-

ment also, by swaying to and fro against the balusters, making them creak loudly in his uncertain progress; at last, with a tipsy "God save all here," he lumbered into the room, tried to clutch at a chair, but, optically miscalculating his distance, overshot the mark, and tumbled headlong upon the floor.

"You dirty, drunken rapscallion," cried Bulworthy, getting into a towering rage, from which, however, he was quickly recalled by a wicked look from the imp, and a threatening movement towards the dreaded top-boots and spurs.

"Listen, and say nothing until you are spoken to," said the little chap, as grand as you please.

"Not a word," replied the cowed Squire.

"Now, Daniel, my friend, I want to have a talk with you." The Squire started with astonishment; he could have sworn that he heard his own voice; but the big sounds proceeded from the lips of the little chap on the table beside him.

"Wid all the veins of my heart, Squire, jewel," replied Dan's voice, though Dan's mouth never opened at all, and Bulworthy was looking him straight in the face.

"You are not satisfied with your condition in life," continued the voice.

"You never spoke a truer word nor that," replied Dan's invisible proxy.

"Neither am I."

"More fool you."

"Would you change places with me?"

"Indeed, an' I would if I had the chance; how would you like to be in mine?"

"It's just what I long for."

Thus far, the conversation was carried on in the voices of the Squire and the cobbler; but now they were both amazed at hearing bellowed out, in sounds like the roar of a cataract when you stop your ears occasionally:

"Blind and dissatisfied mortals, have your desire; let each take the shape and fill the station of the other, never to obtain your original form and condition until both are as united in the wish to return thereto as you are now to quit them."

A terrific thunderclap burst overhead, stunning them both for a few minutes, and, when its last reverberation died away in the distance, the little jockey had disappeared, all supernatural sounds had ceased. The sentient part of the discontented Squire found itself inhabiting the mortal form of the cobbler, prone on the floor, hopelessly and helplessly drunk, while the unhappy Dan appeared in the portly form, and suffered the gouty pangs of the rich Mr. Bulworthy.

CHAPTER IV.

"Oft do we envy those whose lot, if known,
Would prove to be less kindly than our own."

The change accomplished by the embodied wishes of the two discontented mortals was, to all appearance, perfect. They bore, indeed, the outward semblance each of the other, but yet retained their own individual thoughts, feelings, and inclinations; and manifold, as may be imagined, were the embarrassments and annoyances consequent upon this strange duality, to the great mystification of their respective households.

The morning after the singular compact was made, the more than usually outrageous conduct of the supposed Bulworthy placed the establishment in the greatest possible uproar, for the nerves and sinews of the imprisoned Dan, wholly unacquainted, ere this, with any ailment other than the emptiness of hunger, or the occasional headache whisky purchased, now twisted and stretched with the sharper agonies laid up by his predecessor, lashed him into an absolute hurricane of fury. Unable to move his nether extremities, he gnashed his teeth, venting his rage by smashing everything that he could reach.

This terrible turmoil reached the ears of the domestics, filling them with apprehension.

"Be good to us," said Mary. "What is it now?"

"Ora, don't ax me," replied Barney, who had just come

down from the caged lion. "It's fairly bewildhered I am, out an' out; I wouldn't wondher av it was burn the house about our ears he would, in one of his tanthrums."

"What's worryin' him now?"

"Faix, the misthress is at the head ov it, an' the gout's at the feet, an', between the two, I wouldn't be surprised av his thrunk was imptied afore long."

Up stairs the tempest raged with undiminished fury.

"I tell you I won't, I won't," roared the impatient patient. "I never could taste a dhrop of physic in my life."

"Oh, my! what a fib," said his consoler, the sweet-voiced Mrs. Bulworthy. "Why, you've swallowed enough to kill a regiment of decent people. indeed, I don't know what's come over you to day, at all; you're not a bit like yourself."

"The devil I'm not," said the other, somewhat alarmed; but a glance at his swathed extremities, accompanied by a spasm of pain, gave him uncomfortable assurance that he was still in the Squire's skin. "Bedad, ma'm," he went on, "if you and the gout ain't enough to drive a man out of himself, I don't know what would; get out, I tell you, and leave me alone; one at a time's enough."

"Will you promise to read this tract, then?"

"It's a mighty fine time to talk about readin'. How much money am I worth?"

"You surely don't forget that, Pether?"

"Well, indeed, what with the pain and other little matters, it has slipped my memory."

"Just eight thousand six hundred pounds."

"As much as that? murdher alive! you don't say so; then let us pack up and be off," cried he, with an injudicious bound of pleasure that brought the corkscrew into his joints with redoubled acuteness.

"Go, where?" inquired Mrs. Bulworthy, as coolly as though she were enjoying the agony which revelled through his racked frame.

"Anywhere," screamed he. "Anywhere out of this vagabone neighborhood. Ah! tear an aiges av I thought I was going to be massacreed in this way, I'd a stayed as I was; it's to the very marrow of my bones that I'm sorry for it now."

"Sorry for what, Pether?" said Mrs. Bulworthy; "what in the name of gracious are you raving about?"

"Nothing," replied he, "only it's ravin' with the hunger I am; I feel as if I hadn't had anything to eat for six weeks or more."

"Sure, won't you have something in a few minutes," said she. "There's the turtle soup and curried lobster you ordered for lunch getting ready as fast as it can."

"You don't tell me that; may-be I won't astonish it then," said he, smacking his lips at the delicious anticipation of devouring dishes that, to him, were hitherto apocryphal things.

"Is there anything else you want before I go?"

"Nothing in the world, except, may-be, you might just run over the way and see how Mrs. Duff and the babby is."

"Heigh-day!" screamed Mrs. Bulworthy, bestowing

upon him one of her most indignant glances. "I'd like to know what business you have to be thinking of Mrs. Duff and her babby!"

"Would you, really, ma'm? then, if your curiosity is anyway tickled, I'll have you to understand that it's a mighty high regard I entertain for them two people," replied he.

"You do, do you? why, then, it's a face you have to say that same to me, you dirty, miserable, money-scrapin' ignoramus; me, that took such care of your body and sowl for so many years."

"Read one of your papers, ma'm; practice what you preach," suggested the fictitious Bulworthy.

"How would you look if I was to say that I had a regard for the cobbler himself, since you're so mightily interested in his wife?" said she, with an injured-woman air and look.

"Say, ma'm! Bedad, I'd say that the cobbler isn't such a fool as to return the compliment," replied the other, in a provoking tone, that made the eyes of Mrs. Bulworthy flash green like those of a cat in the dark.

"I'm not so sure of that," she retorted, with a meaning toss of her fallacious curls, that implied unspeakable things.

"But I *am*, you see, strange as it may appear, ma'm," he went on, with a jolly laugh, strangled suddenly by a gouty pang that made him roar again.

"Serve you right, you ungrateful reprobate; I saw you this morning flinging your good-for-nothing eyes at

the jade; but I'll serve you out for it, see if I don't; you shall have a blessed time, if ever a man had in the world, you vile, deceitful, double-faced old porcupine; after the years we've been together, too, slavin' and working to scrape up the bit of money to be the comfort of our old age," she continued, diverging into the sentimental, and dropping a few hard tears, that fell from her cold eyes like pellets of hail. "You want to break my heart, you do, you murderer, that you may follow your wicked coorses without hendrance. Mrs. Duff and her babby; indeed, *her* babby! how do I know who's babby it is?" and she looked green-eyed monsters at the supposititious Squire, who heightened her fiery temper up to explosion-point, by replying, with a chuckle.

"Faix, the babby's mine, I b'leeve."

Now be it understood that, for the instant, his disputable identity was forgotten, and it was all *Dan* that spoke:

"Yours," shrieked the now infuriated female, making a threatening demonstration towards him.

"Yes—no—I mean—oh, murdher, I forgot I was ould Bulworthy for a minnit. It's a rise I was takin' out of you, that's all," he went on, "just for the fun of the thing."

The further discussion of this delicate subject was put a stop to by the entrance of Barney and Mary with the Squire's lunch; a very gratifying and timely interruption to the stormy *tête-à-tête*, in the opinion of one of the party, at all events.

The delicious condiments being duly served, from which

arose an appetizing odor, stimulating Dan's appetite into ravenous hunger, "Won't you sit down, ma'm," said he, "and take a mouthful?"

"Indeed, and it's polite you are, all of a sudden. You never asked the like before, but was always glad enough to get me out of sight that you might gormandize to your heart's content," replied she, acrimoniously. "But it's a sure sign that you are guilty of something wrong somewhere, with somebody, or you wouldn't be so extra accommodating."

"Sit down, and howld yer prate," cried the other, anxious to attack the tempting viands.

"I won't, you ould sinner. I know you don't want me, It's only your conscience that's giving you no rest. I'll leave you to stuff and cram, and I only wish it was pison, that I do." With this pleasant observation, hissed viperously through her closed teeth, she flounced out of the room, giving the door a parting bang that sent an electric shock of pain through poor Dan's nervous system.

"Oh! milliah murdher," groaned he, "an' this is the agreeable speciment of a walkin' vinegar-cruet, that I left my scanty but comfortable home, and the angel that made a heaven of it, for. Well, the fools ain't all gone yet—but, never mind, isn't there the money and the eatin'; so, here goes to have a feed that 'ud take the concate out of a hungry elephant."

So saying, he lifted off the cover, and plunged the ladle into the steaming tureen, when, to his enormous surprise, instead of the savory mess he anticipated, he fished up and

deposited upon his plate, the identical little jockey before described, spurs and all.

"How are you, Mr Duff?" said he, touching his cap in true stable style, as he seated himself upon the raised edge of the soup-plate.

"You have the advantage of me, sir," replied Dan, reverentially, for he was a firm believer in "the good people," that is to say, the fairies, and dreaded the immensity of their power.

"We haven't met before, to be sure," said the little fellow, "but you see I know who you are, in spite of that fleshy stuffing you have got into."

"Bedad, there's no mistake about that, sir," replied Dan. "Would it be too great a liberty to ax what it is I'm indebted to for the honor of your company at this particular time?"

"Certainly not, Dan. The fact is, between you and me, I'm always present where there's such good cheer to be found as I see before me."

"Indeed, sir, an' would it inconvenience you much to sit somewhere else, for I'm mortial hungry at this present minit, an' I'm afeard I'd be splashin' your boots with the gravy."

"Anything to oblige," said the other, jumping over the edge of the plate, like a four-year old.

"Thank you, sir. I'll do as much for you, provided it's in my power," observed the hungry cobbler, drawing nearer a huge dish of curried lobster, the spice-laden steam from which would create a new appetite in repletion's self.

Heaping up his plate, while his mouth filled with water at the glorious sight, he was just about to shovel a vast quantity into his capacious mouth, when a sharp

"Stop, Dan!" from the little jockey, arrested his hand mid-way.

"Do you know the result of your eating that mouthful?"

"Never a bit of me, sir," said Dan, making another movement towards his head.

"Ha! wait till I tell you," cried the other.

Dan stopped again. "This is wonderful tantalizin' to an impty Christian," said he.

"Listen, Dan. I have a sort of regard for you, and so I'll give you this warning: If you swallow that stuff that's overloading your knife"—Dan wasn't genteel in his eating —"I'll have to ride a hurdle race upon your big toe, and I'll be bail that I'll make it beat all the rest of your anatomy in the way of jumping."

"You don't mean that?" cried Dan, dropping knife and all into the plate before him.

"Every word of it," said the little fellow.

"Oh, get out! you're not in airnest?"

"May-be you'd like to try?"

"Be the mortial o' war, I dón't b'leeve you, anyway the hungriness is drivin' all consequences out of me reckonin', so, here goes, jump or no jump." So, with a desperate recklessness, Dan rushed greedily at the eatables, and never in his life did he eat the tithe part of what he demolished upon this occasion. Everything on the table

disappeared before his all-devouring appetite, like smoke. and as the "materials were handy, he topped all up with a "sereechin' hot" tumbler of whisky-punch, stiff enough to poke courage into any man's heart.

In the meantime, wholly absorbed in his prodigious banquet, he had quite lost sight of his friend, the jockey; but now, as with a sigh of intense satisfaction, he reclined back in the cushioned chair, he became sensible of a sort of fidgetiness about his foot, and on looking down, what should he see but the little chap, very busy indeed, with his whip in his mouth, saddling up his big toe, as gingerly as you please. He was just giving the girth a last pull, which he accompanied with the usual jerking expression, making Dan wince a little, from a sense of tightness in the nag.

The business-like manner of the chap, however, soon banished the uncomfortable feeling, and so excited Dan's risibilities, that the tears rolled down his cheeks with uncontrollable laughter. It is astonishing how very near the surface the leverage of a good dinner and a warm "tod," lifts up one's jolly feelings.

Dan was now in a condition to sign a treaty of perpetual amity with all mankind.

Delusive tranquillity!

"Mount," cried the little rider, jumping into his saddle. "Hurrah! off we go! heigh!"

The first slash of the whip and dig of the spur changed the nature of Dan's emotions most effectually. He roared, he raged, he twisted about like an eel on a spear. Still

fiercely and unmercifully the little jockey plied the lash and the goad. Still he shouted, "Hurrah! jump, you devil, jump!"

Now, Dan swore like a rapparee; now, he called upon every saint in the calendar; but there was no cessation to his torture. In the extremity of his fury, he flung the whisky-bottle at the little rider's head; but as it struck his own foot, it only augmented the terrible agony.

From praying and swearing he fell to weeping, but the stony-hearted little tyrant was not assailable by tears or entreaties. Promises of amendment were equally useless; until, at last, happening to recollect what a horror all supernaturals have of the pure element, he seized a tumbler of water, and nearly drowned his tormentor with its contents. This had the desired effect. The little vagabond dismounted with a shrill cry of annoyance, and rushed over towards the fire-place, to dry his soaked garments.

"Ha, ha! you thief of the world, I know what'll settle your hash now—wather!" said Dan, instantly relieved from pain; "and, wid a blessin', you shall have enough of that same, if ever you venture to come hurdle-racin' on any toes o' mine.

"Stick to that Dan, my hero," said the little fellow, as he shook the drops off his drenched jacket; "stick to that, and you may depend upon it that I'll never trouble you any more."

And so, having got rid of his enemy, Dan snuggled himself back into the comfortable easy-chair, and very soon forgot himself and all the real world, in the perplexities and comic horrors of a dyspeptic dream.

CHAPTER V.

Within the home where jealousy is found,
A Upas grows that poisons all around.

It would be as unprofitable as impossible to follow the ever-varying images of a dream, which apparently consumed the best part of a century; every half hour of which had its separate distress, although the actual period of time passed did not reach ten minutes, to such singular and enormous expansion was the imagination swollen. The few placid moments distorted into numberless years of terror, like the drop of seemingly pure water, resolved, by microscopic power, into an ocean of repulsive monsters.

Dan had just been very properly condemned to death for the five and twentieth time, and had waited in gasping dread for the infliction of some inconceivable—except under such circumstances—mode of bodily torture, when he heard a tremendous noise, like the explosion of an immense piece of ordnance, close by his side. With a nervous start, that benumbed his frame like a powerful shock, he awoke, bathed in perspiration and half dead with fright. The sound was repeated. It was a simple, single, hesitating little knock at the chamber-door.

"Who's there?" he stammered, scarcely yet aroused to the consciousness of his identity.

"It's me, sir," replied a gentle voice, that thrilled through

him with different sensations, for delight and joy stole over him like a sun-ray. It was his wife's.

"Come in, Peg," said he, "for an angel that you are. If it wasn't for this blessed interruption I'd have died in my bed with the wear an' tear of murdherin' bad dreams." He would fain have rushed into Peggy's arms as she entered, but the first attempt at making use of his continuations painfully reminded him that they belonged to somebody else. It also admonished him that it was necessary for him to support his new character with dignity.

"Well, ma'm," said he, "what do you mean by disturbin' me in this unprincipled way?"

"Indeed, sir," replied Peggy, timidly, "an' I'm a'most ashamed to tell you; it's that man o' mine over the way, sir; sure, I don't know what's come to him, at all, at all, within the last few hours."

"Ho! ho!" thought Dan, "he's had a quare time of it as well as myself. "What's the matter with him, Mrs. Duffy?"

"That's what I want to know, sir, av anybody'd only tell me; I never knew him to kick up such tanthrums ever since we come together; musha! sure, an' the devil's in him if ever he enthered a mortal body, this blessed day—an' *dhrink!* murdher alive, sir, av he wouldn't dhrink the *say* dhry av he only had the swally, I'm not here."

"That's bad, very bad, indeed," said the other, oracularly. "People should never indulge in such terrible propensities," he went on, with a bold attempt at Bulworthy's phraseology.

"Sure, sir, doesn't it depend upon what dhrives them to it?" replied Peggy. "Throuble's mighty dhrouthy, sir, intirely; it dhrys up a poor man's throat as if there was a fire in his mouth, and, indeed, me poor Dan's poorer nor the poorest this holy day."

"That's no rayson, ma'm," said the other, with mock sternness, although his frame was in a glow of joy at hearing how Peggy managed to find excuses for his favorite failing. "That's no rayson, ma'm; the more fool him for addin' flame to the fire."

"Thrue for you, sir, but then doesn't it dhrownd the blaze for the time?"

"I'll answer ye that, Mrs. Duff, if you please, allygorically; did ye ever see a few dhrops of sperrets flung into a blazin' fire? a murdherin' lot of dhrowndin' there is about it; bedad, the fire only burns with greater strength."

"Then, of coorse, your honor, it stands to good sense that it's foolish to take *only* a few dhrops," she replied, with a sly look at the Squire, that made the laugh bubble all over his ruddy face.

"One would a'most suppose that you loved this Dan of yours," said he.

"Love him, sir! do the spring flowers love the sun? does the young mother love her new-born babby?"

"Oh! murdher, murdher! listen to this," cried Dan; "an' me shut up inside of this prison of a carcass; it was a mortial sin to leave her, an' I'm sufferin' for it as I ought, an' it sarves me right." The thought made him savage, so turning to poor Peggy with a look of anger, he continued, fiercely:

"What brought you here, ma'm? may-be you'll condescind to inform me at oncet."

"Oh! sir, don't be angry wid him, but its outrageous intirely that he is; sure, he wants somethin' that I'm afeared to ax."

"What is it? don't keep me waitin' all day."

"I hope yer honor will take into considheration the way he's in just now, for he sthole out onbeknown to me, an' how he got the sup, I can't tell; but it's on him dhreadful, or he'd never think of the likes."

"The likes of what? what's throublin' him now? speak out, woman, or you'll drive the little bit of patience that I have clean out of me."

"Then, sir, the long an' the short of it is, an' I dunno what put such foolishness in his head, he towld me to ax yer honor, if yer honor had a thrifle of that soup left; he'd take it as a mighty great favor if yer honor would let him have thé least taste in life of it," said Peggy, with an extreme misgiving as to how so presumptuous a request would be received.

"Is that all?" said Dan, calmly, to her intense relief. "Take it, an' welcome, Mrs. Duff, an' if it does him as much good as it did me you won't be throubled wid such a message again, I'll be bound; there's the vagabone stuff in that big bowl over on the sideboard fornenst you; an' tell him, by the same token, from me, that av he feels at all uncomfortable in his present quarthers, it wouldn't kill me right out to swap again."

"Swap what, sir?" inquired Peggy, rather mystified.

"Oh! he'll know what I mean."

"And so do I," screamed the irate Mrs. Bulworthy rushing into the room, at the door of which, she had been listening during the entire conversation, the spirit of which had inflamed her jealous temperament up to fever heat.

"I know what you want to swap, you ill-conditioned profligate," she went on, in true Zantippe style. "You want to swap wives, don't you?"

"Faix, an' you never said a thruer word," coolly replied Dan.

This was too much for the excited dame; with a yell of fury she rushed at Peggy, and would assuredly have indented the marks of all her finger-nails in her comely countenance, but that the other, finding the door conveniently open, snatched up the tureeen of soup and fled down stairs like a phantom.

Her prey thus escaping, the shock of her terrible rage was concentrated upon the head of the devoted Dan; to what grievous extremity it would carry her he had not an idea, but he felt that something awful was about to take place.

"Considher my misfortunes," he cried, "and be merciful, Mrs. Bulworthy."

Implacable as the embodied Parcæ, she advanced towards him.

"You're not goin' to murdher me, woman," he roared.

Silently, she approached still nearer, desperation was in her aspect.

"Help, murdher, help!" cried Dan, inevitable fate seem-

ing to be on the point of overwhelming him in some way or another.

"What the divil is the ould monsther goin' to do?" thought he, as a frightful suspicion raised his flesh into little hillocks, and made his hair sting his head like needle-points, when he saw her deliberately take a singular-looking phial and pour out a few drops of a fiery red liquor, filling the rest of the glass with water, through which the former hissed and eddied for a few moments, and then subsided into a horrible blackness.

"Drink this," she ejaculated, solemnly, "and pay the penalty of your infamous conduct."

"What is it?" he inquired, in a voice of alarm.

"Poison! you profligate," replied the other, regarding him with a Borgian expression.

"Holy Vargin! an' me screwed into the floor wid this *threfalian* gout," gasped Dan, his face bedewed with the effect of his mental agony. "Stop! you murdherin' ould witch! Stop! you have no right to sarve me this way. I don't belong to you at all," cried Dan, as a last resource.

"What do you mean by that, you miserable sinner?"

"I mean that you're no wife o' mine, the Lord be praised for it."

"Would you deny your honest wife, you cannibal?"

"I would—I do," cried he, desperately.

"You're not my husband?"

"I'll be upon my Bible oath I'm not."

"What—not Bulworthy?"

"The divil a toe, ma'm, savin' yer presence. I'm Dan Duff, the cobbler, from over the way."

"Oh, the man's mad—mad as a coot," said Mrs. Bulworthy, with appalling calmness, "and it would only be a mercy to put him out of his misery, soon an' sudden."

"*Tear an aigers*, av I only had the use of these blaggard legs of mine, wouldn't I make an example of ye, you ould witch of Endher," muttered Dan. "I won't be slaughtered without an offer to save myself, any way." With that, he started to his feet, and to his great surprise and delight discovered that his powers of locomotion were unimpeded. With a wild hurroo! he jumped, as only a Munster man can jump, and dancing over to the now thoroughly alarmed Squiress, who could see nothing in such extravagance but a confirmation of his utter insanity, he lifted her in his arms as though she were a rag doll.

"Now, ma'm," said he, "I'll see if I can't cure your propensity for pison. Into that closet you'll go, and out of it you sha'n't budge until you come to your senses, or I come to myself; and I'm afeard that one's as far off as the other—worse luck for both of us;" and so, without the slightest attempt at resistance on her part, not knowing to what extremity this outburst of madness would lead him, he snugly deposited her ladyship in a corner cupboard, which he locked, and put the key in his pocket, accompanying the whole movement with a paroxysm of laughter, so long and loud that she congratulated herself upon the slight shelter thus afforded her, and only feared that the

next phase in his malady would be of more sanguinary a nature.

This great feat accomplished, Dan threw himself back in the easy-chair, and began seriously to ruminate upon his present condition and his future prospects.

"This, then, is what I left my blessed Peg and the blesseder babby for; to live a life of gout and conthrariness, never to have any confidence in my muscles, but always thremblin' for feard that sharp-spurred jockey would take a fancy for a canther, or, what's worse even than that, to be in dhread of the penethratin' tongue of ould mother Gab, yondher, whinever I'm laid by the leg; oh! if iver there was a poor sinner that repinted, it's myself that's last on the list, an' greatest; could I only see the darlin' of a sperret that gev me the good advice I so foolishly kicked at, it's beg her pardon on my bended knees that I would, if it was hot cendhers that was undher them."

At that instant, he was aware of the gentlest of all gentle touches on his shoulder, and on turning his head in the direction, sure enough, there she was.

Dan was prostrate before her, in a moment. "Ora good luck and long life to you, miss, for comin' to me in my disthress; I don't deserve it, I know I don't."

"Get up, Mr. Duff," said the spirit. "I am but the reflection of your better thoughts; therefore, you must proffer your repentance, through me, to the throne of One who rules us both."

"I will, I will," cried the other; "truly and wholly,"

covering his face with his hands, through which the tears now streamed copiously.

"What is your wish?" inquired the good spirit.

"You know, you *must* know, for it's fairly breakin' my heart I am here; I want to get back to myself, and Peggy, an' the boy."

"Ah! you have begun to think of *them* at last."

"I own I have been selfish, sinfully, wretchedly selfish, but I'm cured," replied Dan, in a tone of contrition.

"But you remember the conditions of the compact," said the other," neither of you can regain your original form and station unless both consent."

"Oh! *wirrasthrue*, then I'll never be my own man again," sobbed Dan. "Ould Bulworthy, bad 'cess to him, has the best of the bargain, an' he'll stick to it like wax; small blame to him for it, seein' that I sould my comfort entirely for a pair of murdherin' top-boots; he ain't such an omathaun as to come back here to his gout an' his scowldin' madame, when its a thrifle of hunger is all he'll have to put up wid, over the way, an' there's happiness enough in one glance of Peggy's bright eye, to swally that up if it was ten times as throublesome; and there's the boy, too, that's like a growin' angel about the house, fillin' up every spot of it wid heavenly joy; oh! *wirra, wirra!* sure, I didn't know the luck I was in until I lost it out an' out."

"The perversity of mankind is strange," said the spirit. "Are you certain that Bulworthy is content in his present condition?"

"How the divil can he be otherwise?" replied the other, savagely.

"*You* were not, you remember."

"Because I didn't know there was a *worse:* like an ignorant fool, I thought that a scanty meal now and then was the greatest calamity in the world; be me sowl, I've had the knowledge rubbed into my bones, that too much is sometimes apt to sting a fellow afterwards more than too little."

"Perhaps the sensation of hunger may be to him as disagreeable as the sense of satiety is to you," suggested the spirit.

"Oh! if there was only a chance of that," cried Dan, brightening up at the idea. "An' be the same token, now that I think of it, he did send over for some of that vagabone soup; long life to you, you've put the hope into me heart once more; but how the mischief am I to find out the state of the ould blaggard's feelin's?"

"There's nothing like going to work in a straightforward way," said the spirit; "just put on your hat and go over and ask him."

"Faix, an' I will, an' thank you kindly, too, for puttin' it into me head," replied Dan.

"I wish you good morning, then," said the other, and even while Dan was looking at her straight in her face, she gradually resumed her vapory appearance, growing thinner and thinner, until she finally went out like a puff of tobacco.

CHAPTER VI.

"Within the circle of your own estate,
Confine yourself, nor yearn for brighter fate."

And now let us return to the cobbler's cabin, and see how matters are progressing there. Peggy has just brought over the tureen of soup so fervently longed for by the changed Squire; with a cry of joy, for he is very hard set, indeed, he seized the welcome gift, and placing it between his knees as he sat on the low workstall, prepared to dive into its savory contents, but a groan of horror and disappointment broke from his lips when, on taking off the cover, he found the tureen was empty.

"The pippin-squeezing ruffian," cried he, "he's sent it over without as much as a smell, and I so mortial hungry that I could bite a tenpenny nail in two; if he was here, bad 'cess to me if I wouldn't smash this upon his head."

"That's mighty strange, entirely," said Peggy, "for I'll be on me oath there was plenty in it when I took it off the Squire's sideboard."

"If there was, you must have gobbled it up yourself, or spilt it on the street, you unconsiderate faymale," said Bulworthy.

"Is it me, indeed, Dan, jewel? it's well you know that if it was goold, an' you could ate it, I wouldn't put a tooth into it, when I knew you wanted it so dhreadful," replied Peggy, reproachfully.

"Well, may-be you wouldn't," doggedly observed Bulworthy; "but do, for Heaven's sake, get me somethin' to put an end to the wobblin' that's goin' on in the inside of me; may I never leave this place alive if I think I've had a male's vitells for a month."

"How outrageous you are, Dan," sorrowfully replied the other. "Where am I to get it?"

"Go out an' buy it, ov coorse."

"Arrah what with? I'd like to know; sure, an' won't we have to wait until that purse-proud ould rap over the way pays us the shillin' that he owes us."

A reproachful pang shot through the heart of Bulworthy at that observation. "The ould skinflint," said he, "if I ever get near him again, may-be I won't touch him up for not doin' that same."

"Indeed, an' it would sarve him right," Peggy went on. "Swimmin' in plenty as he is, it's little that he thinks of the pinchin' hunger we feel."

"Don't don't," cried Bulworthy, pressing his hands against his gastronomic regions. "I feel it now, fairly sthranglin' me; it's just as if some wild savage beast was runnin' up and down here, sarchin' for somethin' to devour, and not bein' able to find it, is takin' mouthfuls out of my intayrior by the way of a relish; oh! murdher, I never knew what hunger was before."

"Didn't you, raylly?" Peggy replied, with a queer expression. "Faith, then, it wasn't for the want of chances enough."

"I mean—don't bother—it's famished I am, and crazy a'most; is there a dhrop of dhrink in the house?"

"Not as much as would make a tear for a fly's eye," said Peg.

"No! then what the Puck are we to do?"

"Bear it, I suppose, as well as we can; we've often done it afore, an' what's worse, will have to do it agin, unless the hearts of the rich changes towards us."

"Oh! if ever I get back to myself again," muttered the hungry Squire. "Peg, darlin', go over to the old schamer, an' tell him that av he doesn't send me the shillin' I'll expose him, I know more about him than he thinks for; if he's black conthrary, you might just whisper in his lug that I'm up to his thricks when he was in the grocery line; ax him for me, who shoved the pennies into the butther, wathered the whisky, and sanded the shugar, who"——

"Why, for gracious sake, Dan, where did you pick up all that knowledgeableness?" interrupted Peggy.

"Hem! no matther—never you mind—may-be I only dhreamt it," replied Bulworthy, with some hesitation. "I don't know exactly what I was talkin' about; it's the imptyness that's speakin', so I wouldn't mention it; only go and get somethin' somewhere, av it was only a brick."

"I'll be at him again, Dan, sence you wish it; but it's little blood I'm thinking, we'll be able to squeeze out of his turnip of a heart," said Peggy, putting on her shawl and bonnet, to make the thankless attempt. As she was going out of the door, however, she saw the Squire hobbling across the street.

"Talk of the—what's his name — May I never, but here the ould reprobate comes, hoppin' gingerly over the

stones, like a hen walkin' on a hot griddle. May the saints soften him all over, an' make his heart as tendher as his toes this blessed day. I'll lave you wid him, Dan, darlin', for I'm not over partial to his company. So I'll take the babby out for a blast o' fresh air while yez are convarsin'."

Peggy's preparations for her promenade were quickly made, which resulted in her leaving the place before the gouty visitor had accomplished his short but painful transit from house to house.

"A pretty thing *I've* done for myself," groaned Bulworthy, suffering alike from thirst, hunger, and cold, as he vainly strove, by slapping his hands against his chest, to make the blood circulate warmly through his finger-ends. "Ov coorse that cobblin' scoundrel will never consent to come back to his starvation and poverty—he'd be a greater fool even than I was if he did. Ah! if I ever do get back to a good dinner again, there shan't be a poor devil within a mile of me that'll ever want one while I live. Here comes the cripple; the only chance I have is to pretend that I'm in a sort of second-hand paradise here." So saying, he commenced to sing, in a voice of exaggerated jollity, a verse of

"The jug o' punch,"

accompanying the tune by vigorous whacks of his hammer upon the piece of sole-leather he was beating into the requisite toughness.

The united sounds of merriment and industry smote upon Dan's heart like a knell.

"Listen at the happy ragamuffin, working away like a whole hive o' bees, and chirpin' like a pet canary-bird," said he to himself. "Oh, it's aisy seen he won't want to renew his acquaintance wid this murdherin' gout an' the useless money—but, hit or miss, it won't do to let him see me down in the mouth."

So, putting on a careless swagger, and forcing a tone of joyousness into his voice:

"Hallo, cobbler," he cried, "there you are, bellusin' away like a bagpiper. What an iligant thing it is to see such poor wretches whistlin' themselves into an imitation of comfort."

"How do you know but I'm crammed full of real comfort, bad luck to yer mockin' tongue?" said Bulworthy, disgusted at the other's satisfied demeanor.

"It's pleased I am to see your foggy moon of a face, anyway," he went on. "Where's me shillin'?"

"Why, you poor, miserable attenuation of humanity, how dare you address yourself to me in that orthodox manner?" observed Dan, with an ambitious attempt at Bulworthy's magniloquence.

"Miserable, eh?" replied the other, with a chirp. "Is it me miserable, wid such a home as this?"

"It's all over," thought Dan, "the ould brute's as happy as a bird. Bad luck to the minute that my own pelt made a cage for him."

"Go home," Bulworthy continued, with a grin. "Home to yer wretched hospital of a gazebo."

"Wretched!" retorted Dan, "you wouldn't call it

wretched if you saw the dinner I had to-day; enough, yer sowl to glory, to satisfy half a dozen families."

"That were starvin' around you," cried Bulworthy, with a severe internal spasm, induced by the mention of the dinner.

"Aha! you're beginnin' to think of that now, are you?" said Dan, tauntingly. "How do you like dinin' on spoonfuls of air, and rich men's promises to pay? Bedad, I'm thinkin I have the best of you there."

"Hould yer prate, you ould Turk, an' give me me shillin'," roared Bulworthy, getting impatient.

"The divil a shillin' you get out o' me, that I can tell you. I've got the upper hand of ye this time, an' I'll keep it. It's hungry enough that you've seen me before now, an' tit for tat's fair play all the world over."

"He's content and comfortable, there's no mistake about that," thought Bulworthy, "and I'm booked for starvation all the rest of my miserable days."

"Gout's my lot; I can see that with half an eye," said Dan to himself. "The ould blaggard will never consent to get into these legs again."

"Squire!" cried the cobbler, suddenly, "do you know that the hunger sometimes puts desperate thoughts into a man's head? You owe me a shillin'. I want something to ate. Are you goin' to give it to me?"

"Supposin' I didn't?" said Dan, coolly.

"Bad luck attind me if I don't shake it out o' you, you iron-hearted ould Craysus," replied the other, doggedly.

"I'd like to see you thryin' that," said Dan, flourishing

a huge blackthorn stick dangerously. "You're wake wid the want, an' I'm sthrong wid vittles an' wine. It's aisy to foretell whose head would be cracked first."

"Oh, murdher, Squire, jewel, it's right that you are, for I *am* just as wake as wather itself, an' the jaws of me is fairly rustin' in their sockets for the want of dacent exercise," cried the now subdued Bulworthy. "For the tindher mercy of goodness, then, av you've got the laste taste ov compassion in yer throat, give us a thrifle, av it was only the price ov a salt herrin' or a rasher o' bakin'."

"Oh, ho! it's there you are," thought Dan, as, rendered more hopeful by this injudicious outburst, he assumed a still more severe aspect.

"It's good for you to feel that way," said he, "an' it's mighty little else you can ever expect while you're throublin' the earth, you impidint cobbler. Look at me, you ungrateful thief o' the world—what's all your hungry nibblin's compared wid the sharp tooth that's perpetually gnawin' at my exthremities? To be sure, the jingle of the goold here in my pockets, keeps the pain undher considherably."

"I know it, I know it," groaned Bulworthy. "Oh, av there was only a market for fools, wouldn't I fetch a high price?"

"Purvided that it wasn't overstocked," said Dan, with a mental addition, which he wisely kept to himself, as, suppressing the violent pain he was suffering, he burst into a merry laugh at the doleful appearance of his companion in distress. "Cheer up, man alive," cried he, through his

enforced joyousness; "take example by your neighbors, and content yourself wid your condition. I'm sure it's a mighty agreeable one. See how comfortable I am, an' there's no knowin' what a numberless conglomeration of annoyances men in my responsible station have to put up wid."

"Why, then it's aisy for you to chat," replied Bulwor thy, bitterly, "wid your belly full of prog, rattlin' yer money in yer pockets, and greggin' a poor empty Christian wid the chink; but av you had only dined wid me to-day, you wouldn't be so bumptious, I'll be bound."

"Me dine wid you, is it? bedad, an' that's a good joke," said Dan, with another explosion of laughter. "Ho, ho! my fine fella, av jokes was only nourishin', what a fine feed of fun you might have, to be sure."

"Oh, then, by the king of Agypt's baker, that was hanged for makin' his majesty's loaf short weight—the divil's cure to him—it's starved I'd be that way too, for the fun's pinched right out o' me," replied the Squire, in a melancholy tone.

"Why, you don't mane to be tellin' me that you're unhappy in yer present lot?" Dan asked, in the hope of coming to the point at once.

"Where would be the use in sayin' I'm not?" replied the other, cautiously.

"Only just for the pleasure of gettin' at the thruth."

"Bedad, he'd be a wise man that could crack that egg. If it comes to that, how do you like them legs o' yours? It isn't much dancin' you do now, I'm thinkin'.

"Well, not a great dale, seein' that it's a foolish sort of exercise for a man of my consequence," said Dan, shaking the guineas about in his pockets with increased vigor.

"An' how do you find the Misthress's timper now, might I ax?" inquired Bulworthy, with a meaning look.

"Aisy as an ould glove, I'm obliged to you," Dan replied, with wondrous placidity of countenance.

"Peg, my Peg's a real blessin' in a house; an' as for that jewel of a babby"—

"Howld yer decateful tongue, you circumventin' ould tory," cried Dan, shaking his fist in the other's face, rendered almost beside himself by the allusion to his lost treasures; "do you mind this, you chatin' disciple, av you dare to brag ov havin' any property in them two people I'll give your dirty sowl notice to quit the tinimint that it's insultin' every second o' time you dhraw a breath."

"How can you help yerself, I'd like to know?" demanded Bulworthy, in an insolent tone. "Doesn't Peg belong to me now, an' the child?"

"Be the mortial o' war, av ye don't stop your tongue from waggin' in that way, bad luck to me av I don't take ye be the scruff o' the neck, an shake ye out o' me skin, you robber," shouted Dan, still more furiously—unfortunately losing sight of his discretion in the blindness of his rage, for Bulworthy, thinking he saw a gleaming of hope, determined to pursue his advantage; so he continued:

"The devil a toe will you ever come near them again, my fine fella. Possession's nine points of the law; an' as it's your own countenance that I'm carryin', you can't swear me out o' my position." More betoken, there's no

use in yer gettin' obsthropulous, for I've only to dhrop the lapstone gingerly upon yer toes, to make you yell out like a stuck pig."

At hearing these conclusive words, Dan's policy and his philosophy fled together, and he poured forth the feelings of his heart without concealment or restraint.

"You murdherin' ould vagabone," he cried; "you've got the upper hand of me, an' full well you know it; the divil take yer dirty money, that's weighin' down my pockets; but weighin' my heart down more nor that, av it wasn't that I don't know exactly what harum I'd be doin' to meself; may I never sin av I wouldn't pelt the life out o' you wid fistfulls of it; but it sarves me right, it sarves me right," he went on, swaying his body to and fro, as he sat on the little stool. "Oh! wirra, wirra! what a born natheral I was to swap away my darlin' Peg, that's made out of the best parts of half a dozen angels, for that wizen-faced daughter of ould Nick beyont; an' the blessed babby, too, that's so fresh from the skies that the smell o' Heaven sticks about him yet; to get nothin' for him but a pair of legs that can't lift me over a *thranieen;* oh! it's mad that it's dhrivin' me, intirely."

"Don't take it so much to heart; gruntin', and growlin', an twistin' yerself into a thrue lover's knot, won't do any good now, you know," said Bulworthy, with a quiet smile.

"I know it won't, and that's what makes me desperate," replied Dan, starting up, with clenched teeth, and a dangerous glance in his eye.

"One word for all," he continued, "are you going to give me back meself?"

"I'd be a purty fool to do that, accordin' to your own story," said the other, calmly, now tolerably sure of his ground.

"Then Heaven forgive me, but here goes," cried Dan, resolutely. "Peg, jewel, it's for your sake an' the child; I can't live widout yez, anyhow, an' so I may's well thravel the dark road at oncet."

"What do you mane, you wild-lookin' savage?" shouted Bulworthy, as he saw the other advance threateningly towards him.

"I mane to thry and squeeze the breath out ov you, or get meself throttled in the attempt," said Dan, sternly; "I know that I'm no match for you now, bad 'cess to your podgey carcass that I'm obleeged to carry, whether I will or no; come on, you thief o' the world, come on; it doesn't matther a sthraw which of us is sint into kingdom come, only it's mighty hard for me to have the since knocked out o' me by me own muscles."

So saying, he put forth all the strength he could muster, and clenched Bulworthy manfully; short, but decisive was the struggle, for the superior vigor of the latter, enabled him to shake off Dan like a feather, and when he rushed again to the attack, Bulworthy seized the ponderous lapstone, and raising it at arm's length, let its whole force descend upon Dan's unprotected head, crushing him down prone and senseless as though he had been stricken by a thunderbolt.

It was some time before Dan returned to full consciousness; but when he did, what was his intense delight to

find Peggy bending over him, tenderly bathing a trifling wound in his head.

"Hurrah, Peg! it is back I am to myself in airnest," he cried. "Give us a bit of the lookin'-glass, darlin'; oh! the butcherin' ruffian, what a crack he gev me on me skull."

"Whisht, don't talk, Dan, acush," said Peggy, in a low, musical voice; "shure, its ravin' you've been, terrible; oh! that whisky, that whisky!"

A sudden thought flashed across Dan's mind, which he judiciously kept to himself; and, inasmuch, as the reader may, without much exercise of ingenuity imagine what that thought was, the narrator will be silent, also.

It will be no abuse of confidence, however, to say that the lesson Dan received, did him good, for he never was known to repine at his lot, but, redoubling his exertions, was enabled, after a few years had elapsed, to sport his top-boots on Sundays, and Peggy to exhibit her silk "gound," as well as the purse-proud Squire and his gay madame, over the way.

THE

BLARNEY STONE.

Oh, did you ne'er hear of the Blarney,
'Tis found near the banks of Killarney,
Believe it from me, no girl's heart is free,
Once she hears the sweet sound of the Blarney.

LOVER.

"I TELL you, Mike, agra! it's no manner o' use, for do it I can't, an' that's the long an' the short of it."

"Listen at him, why it isn't bashful that you are, eh, Ned, avic?"

"Faix, an' I'm afeard it is."

"*Gog's bleakey!* why, they'll put you in the musayum along wid the marmaids an' the rattlin' sneaks; a bashful Irishman! why, a four-leaved shamrogue 'ud be a mutton-chop to that, man alive."

"So they say; but I've cotch the complaint anyway."

"Well, *tear an aigers*, I never heerd the likes; it makes me mighty unhappy, for if modesty gets a footin' among us it'll be the ruin of us altogether. I shouldn't wonder but some of them retirin' cockneys has inoculated us with the affection, as they thravelled through the country.

Well, an' tell us, how d'you feel whin you're blushin' Ned?"

"Arrah! now don't be laughin' at me, Mike; sure we can't help our wakeness—it's only before her that the heart of me melts away intirely."

"Never mind, avic; shure it's a good man's case anyway; an' so purty Nelly has put the *comether* over your sinsibilities?"

"You may say that, Mike, *aroon*. The niver a bit of sinse have I left, if it's a thing that I iver happened to have any; an' now, Mike, without jokin', isn't it mighty quare that I can't get the cowardly tongue to wag a word out o' my head when her eye is upon me—did you iver see Nelly's eye, Mike?"

"Scores o' times."

"May-be that isn't an eye?"

"May-be there isn't a pair of thim, since you come to that?"

"The divil such wicked-lookin' innocince iver peeped out of the head of a Christian afore, to my thinkin'."

"It's nothin' but right that you should think so, Ned."

"Oh, Mike! to me, the laugh that bames out of thim, whin she's happy, is as good to a boy's feelin's as the softest sun-ray that iver made the world smile; but whin she's sad—oh, murdher, murdher! Mike—whin them wathery dimonds flutthers about her silky eye-lashes, or hangs upon her downy cheek, like jew upon a rose-lafe, who the divil could endure it? Bedad, it's as much as I can do to stand up agin them merry glances; but when her eye takes to

the wather, be the powers of war, it bothers the navigation of my heart out an' out."

"Thrue for you, Ned."

"An' thin her mouth! Did you iver obsarve Nelly's mouth, Mike?"

"At a distance, Ned."

"Now, that's what I call a rale mouth, Mike; it doesn't look like some, only a place to ate with, but a soft-talkin', sweet-lovin' mouth, wid the kisses growin in clusthers about it that nobody dare have the impudence to pluck off, eh! Mike?"

"Howld your tongue, Ned."

"If Nelly's heart isn't the very bed of love, why thin Cupid's a jackass, that's all. An' thin her teeth; did you notice thim teeth? why pearls is pavin'-stones to them; how they do flash about, as her beautiful round red lips open to let out a voice that's just for all the world like talkin' honey, every word she says slippin' into a fellow's soul, whether he likes it or not. Oh! Mike, Mike, there's no use in talkin', if she isn't an angel, why she ought to be, that's all."

"You're mighty far gone, Ned, an' that's a fact. It's wonderful what a janius a boy has for talkin' nonsense when the soft-emotions is stirrin' up his brains. Did you ever spake to her?"

"How the divil could I? I was too busy listenin'; an' more betoken, between you an' me, the rale truth of the matter is, I couldn't do it. Whether it was bewitched I was, or that my sinses got dhrounded wid drinkin' in her

charms, makin' a sort of a mouth of my eye, I don't know, but ev'ry time I attempted to say somethin', my tongue, bad luck to it, staggered about as if it was corned, an' the divil a word would it say for itself, bad or good,"

"Well, now, only to think. Let me give you a word of advice, Ned; the next time you see her, take it aisy, put a big stone upon your feelin's an' ax about the weather; you see you want to bowlt out all you have to say at once, an' your throat is too little to let it through."

"*Be the mortial*, an' that's a good advice, Mike, if I can but folly it. This love is a mighty quare affection, ain't it?"

"Thremendious. I had it oncet myself."

"How did you ketch it?"

"I didn't ketch it at all. I took it natural."

"And did you ever get cured, Mike? Tell us."

"Complately."

"How?"

"I got married."

"Oh! let us go to work."

From the foregoing characteristic conversation between Mike Riley and his friend, Ned Flynn, it would appear pretty evident that the blind boy's shaft,

"Feathered with pleasure and tipped with pain,"

was fast embedded in the heart of the latter, or in plaine. and not less expressive phrase, he was bothered entirel, by Miss Nelly Malone.

During an interval of rest from mowing, the dialogue took place; that over, they resumed their labor; the convalescent "married man" humming a sprightly air, which kept time to the stroke of his scythe, while the poor wounded deer, Ned, came in now and then with an accompaniment of strictly orthodox sighs.

It certainly was a most extensive smite on the part of pretty Nell; and a nobler heart never beat under crimson and gold, than the honest, manly one which now throbbed with the first ardor of a passion pure and unselfish. A short time longer, and they rested again. Ned was sad and silent; and the never-forgotten respect, which makes suffering sacred in the eyes of an Irish peasant, kept Mike mute also; at last, Ned, with a half downcast, whole sheepish expression, said, the ghost of a smile creeping over his features:

"Mike, do you know what?"

"What?" said Mike.

"I've writ a song about Nelly."

"No," rejoined his friend, with that ambiguous emphasis which might as well mean yes. Adding, with dexterous tact, "Is it a song? An' why the mischief shouldn't you; sure an' haven't you as illigant a heart to fish songs up out as anybody else? Sing us it."

"I'm afeard that you'll laugh if I do, Mike."

"Is it me?" replied Mike, so reproachfully that Ned was completely softened. After the making-your-mind-up minute or two, with a fine, clear voice, he sung.

THE ROSE OF TRALEE.

All ye sportin' young heroes, wid hearts light an' free,
Take care how you come near the town of Tralee;
For the witch of all witches that iver wove spell
In the town of Tralee, at this moment does dwell.
Oh, then, don't venture near her, be warned by me,
For the divil all out is the Rose of Tralee.

She's as soft an' as bright as a young summer morn,
Her breath's like the breese from the fresh blossom'd thorn,
Her cheek has the sea shell's pale delicate hue,
And her lips are like rose leaves just bathed in the dew;
So, then, don't venture near her, be warned by me,
For she's mighty desthructive, this Rose of Tralee.

Oh! her eyes of dark blue, they so heavenly are
Like the night sky of summer, an' each holds a star;
Were her tongue mute as silence, man's *life* they'd control;
But eyes an' tongue both are too much for one's *soul*.
Young men, stay at home, then, and leave her to me,
For I'd die with delight for the Rose of Tralee.

And now, after this toploftical illustration of the state of Ned's feelings, and inasmuch as they are about to resume their labor, let us leave them to their mowing, and see after Miss Nelly Malone, for love of whom poor Ned had *tasted* of the Pierian spring.

In a neat little chamber, bearing about it the unmistakable evidence of a tidy woman's care, sits the individual herself, her little fingers busily employed in knitting a very small stocking—her own; no trace of wealth is to be seen in this humble abode, but of its more than equivalent, comfort, it is redolent. At the open casement there peep

in the blossoms of the honey-suckle and the sweet-pea, filling the air with a perfume, more grateful than art could ever obtain; sundry *artless* prints, and here and there a ballad on some heart-breaking subject, probably amongst them the highwayman's autoballadography, wherein he heroically observes,

"I robbed Lord Mansfield, I do declare,
And Lady Somebody in Grosvenor Square,"

are fastened to the walls, decorated with festoons of cut paper of most dazzling variety of color; a fine, plump, contented lark, in an open cage, which he scorns to leave, returns his mistress's caress with a wild, grateful song, whilst, tutored into friendliness, a beautiful sleek puss, whose furry coat glances like satin in the sun-ray, dozes quietly upon the window-sill, indulging in that low purr, which is the sure indication of a happy cat. It is the home of innocence and beauty, fitly tenanted.

And what are pretty Nelly's thoughts, I wonder; a shade of something, which may be anxiety or doubt, but scarcely sorrow, softens the brightness of her lovely face. She speaks, 'twill be no treason to listen. You will perceive that the cat is her *confidante*—a discreet one it must be confessed.

"It's foolishness, so it is; isn't it puss?"

Puss doesn't condescend to notice the remark.

"Now, Minny, isn't it, I ask you, isn't it folly, the worst of folly to be thinkin' of one who doesn't think of me? I won't do it any more, that I won't. Heigh 'ho! I wonder

if he loves me. I somehow fancy he does, and yet again if he did, why couldn't he say so; there's one thing certain, and that is, I don't love *him*, that is to say, I *won't* love him; a pretty thing, indeed, to give my heart to one who wouldn't give me his in return. That *would* be a bad bargain, wouldn't it, puss?"

Pussy acquiesced, for silence, they say, is synonymous.

"But, oh!" resumed Nelly, "if I thought he *did* love me —there, now, I've dropped a stitch—what *am* I thinkin' of? —I mustn't give way to such foolishness. Why, the bird is done singin', and Minny is looking angry at me out of her big eyes—don't be jealous, puss, you shall always have your saucer of milk, whatever happens, and—hark! that's his step, it is! he's comin'! I wonder how I look," and running to her little glass, Nelly, with very pardonable vanity, thought those features could not well be improved, and—the most curious part of the matter—she was right.

"He's a long time coming," thought she, as, stealing a glance through the white window-curtain she saw Ned slowly approach the garden gate; gladly would she have flown to meet him, but maidenly modesty restrained her; now he hesitates a moment, takes a full gulp of breath, and nears the house; at every approaching step, Nelly's pulse beat higher; at last she bethought herself it would be more prudent to be employed; so, hastily taking up her work, which was twisted and ravelled into inextricable confusion, with a seeming calm face she mechanically plied her needles, her heart giving one little shiver as Ned rapped a small, chicken-livered rap at the door. Nelly

opened it with a most disingenuous, "Ah! Ned, is that you? who *would* have thought it! Come in, do."

The thermometer of Nelly's feelings was about fever heat, yet she forced the index to remain at freezing point. "Take a chair, won't you?"

And there sat those two beings, whose hearts yearned for each other, looking as frigid as a pair of icicles, gazing on the wall, the floor, pussy, or the lark. Ned suddenly discovered something that wanted a deal of attending to in the band of his hat; whilst Nelly, at the same time, evinced an extraordinary degree of affection for the cat. To say the truth, they were both very far from comfortable. Ned had thoroughly made up his mind to speak this time if ruin followed, and had even gone so far as to have settled upon his opening speech, but Nelly's cold and indifferent "take a chair," frightened every word out of his head; it was essentially necessary that he should try to recover himself, and he seemed to think that twisting his hat into every possible form and tugging at the band were the only possible means by which it could be accomplished. Once more all was arranged, and he had just cleared his throat to begin, when the rascally cat turned sharply round and stared him straight in the face, and in all his life he thought he never saw the countenance of a dumb creature express such thorough contempt.

"It well becomes me," thought he, "to be demeanin' myself before the cat," and away flew his thoughts again.

Of course, all this was very perplexing to Nelly, who, in the expectation of hearing something interesting, remained

patiently silent. There was another considerable pause; at last, remembering his friend Mike's advice, and, moreover, cheered by a most encouraging smile from the rapidly-thawing Nell, Ned wound up his feelings for one desperate effort, and bolted out—

"Isn't it fine to day, Miss Malone?"

Breaking the silence so suddenly that Nelly started from her chair, the lark fluttered in the cage, and puss made one jump bang into the garden.

Amazed and terrified by the results of his first essay, fast to the roof of his mouth Ned's tongue stuck once more, and finding it of no earthly use trying to overcome his embarrassment—that the more he floundered about the deeper he got into the mud, he gathered himself up, made one dash through the door, and was off like lightning. Nelly sighed as she resumed her knitting, and this time she was sad in earnest.

"Well, what luck?" said Mike, as, nearly out of breath from running, Ned rejoined him in the meadow. "Have you broke the ice?"

"Bedad, I have," said Ned, "and more betoken, fell into the wather through the hole."

"Why, wouldn't she listen to you?"

"Yes, fast enough, but I didn't give her a chance; my ould complaint came strong upon me. Ora! what's the use in havin' a tongue at all, if it won't wag the words out of a fellow's head. I'm a purty speciment of an omadhaun; there she sot, Mike, lookin' out of the corners of her eyes at me, as much as to say, spake out like a man, with

a soft smile runnin' about all over her face, and playing among her beautiful dimples, like the merry moonbame dancin' on the lake. Oh, murther! Mike, what the mischief am I to do? I can't live without her, an' I haven't the heart to tell her so."

"Well, it is disgraceful," replied Mike, "to see a good-lookin' man disparage his country by flinchin from a purty girl; may-be it might do you good to go an' kiss the BLARNEY STONE."

"That's it," exclaimed Ned, joyously clapping his hands together, and cutting an instinctive caper, "that's it. I wonder I niver thought of it before; I'll walk every stitch of the way, though my legs should drop off before I got half there. Do you think it 'ud do me good to kiss it?"

"Divil a doubt of it—sure it never was known to fail yet," said Mike, oracularly.

"Why, then, may I niver ate a male's vittles, if there's any vartue in the stone, if I don't have it out of it." And that very night, so eager was Ned to get cured of his bashfulness, off he started for Killarney. It was a long and tedious journey, but the thought of being able to speak to Nelly when he returned, was sufficient to drive away fatigue; in due time he reached the far-famed castle,

> "On the top of whose wall,
> But take care you don't fall,
> There's a stone that contains all the Blarney!"

Mike climbed with caution, discovered the identical spot, and believing implicitly that his troubles were now at an

end, knelt, and with a heart-whole prayer for his absent Nelly, reverently kissed *The Blarney Stone.*

True, devoted love had lent him strength to overcome the difficulties of access, and imagination, that powerful director of circumstance, did the rest. It was with humility and diffidence he had approached the object of his pilgrimage, but he descended from it with head erect and countenance elated; he could now tell his burning thoughts in *her* ear; he was a changed man; a very pretty girl, who officiated as guide, and upon whose pouting lips, report says, the efficacy of the charm has been frequently put to the test, met him at the archway of the castle—for no other reason in the world than merely to try if he were sufficiently imbued with the attractive principle—Ned watched an opportunity, and, much more to his own astonishment than to hers, gave her a hearty kiss, starting back to watch the effect. She frowned not, she did not even blush. Ned was delighted; his end was obtained,

"He could kiss who he plazed with his Blarney;" consequently, feeling supremely happy, without losing another moment, he retraced his steps homeward.

Meantime, Nelly missed her silent swain, whose absence tended materially to strengthen the feeling of affection which she entertained for him; day after day crept on, yet he came not; and each long hour of watching riveted still more closely her heart's fetters. Now, for the first time, she acknowledged to herself how essential he was to her happiness, and with a fervent prayer that the coming morning might bring him to her side, she closed each day.

Her wonder at last at his continued absence quickened into anxiety, and from anxiety into alarm. Jealousy, without which there cannot be a perfect love, spread its dark shadow o'er her soul, and she was wretched. In vain she reasoned with herself; the sun of her existence seemed suddenly to be withdrawn, and all was gloom; even the very bird, appearing to share his mistress's mood, drooped his wing and was silent; so much are externals influenced by the spirit of the hour, that her homey chamber felt comfortless and solitary. Nelly loved with a woman's love, devotedly, intensely, wholly; to lose him would be to her the loss of all that rendered life worth living for; hers was an affection deserving that which was given in lieu, although as yet she knew it not.

Gazing out one day in the faint hope of seeing something of her beloved, her heart gave one sudden and tremendous bound. She saw him—he had returned at last. But how changed in demeanor. Can her eyes deceive her? No. Her heart tells her it is he, and it could not err.

Instead of the downcast look and hesitating step, joy laughed forth from his face, and his tread was easy, rollicking, and careless; as he came nearer, she thought she heard him sing; he did sing! what could it portend? Had he found one who knew how to break the shell of reserve? 'Twas torture to think so, and yet it was the first image that presented itself to her anxious heart. It was now her turn to be tongue-tied, dumb from agitation; she could not utter a syllable, but trembling to the very

core, sat silently awaiting what she feared was to prove the funeral knell of her departed happiness.

With a merry song upon his lips, Ned lightly bounded over the little paling, and in a minute more was in her presence. Speak or move she could not, nor did his first salutation place her more at ease.

"Nelly," said he, "you drove me to it, but it's done! it's done!"

"What's done—what can he mean?" thought Nelly, more agitated than ever.

"It's all over now," he continued, "for I've kissed it. Don't you hear me, Nelly? I say I've kissed it."

"In heaven's name," cried the pale, trembling girl, "what do you mean—kissed who?"

"No *who* at all," said Ned, laughingly, "but *it*, I've kissed *it*."

"Kissed what?"

"Why, the Blarney Stone, to be sure," screamed out Ned, flinging his hat at pussy, and executing an extremely complicated double-shuffle in the delight of the moment; indeed, conducting himself altogether in a manner which would have jeopardized the sanity of any one but a love-stricken Irishman.

"Sure it was all for you, Nelly, mavourneen, that I did it; it has loosened the strings of my tongue, and now I can tell you how deeply your image is burnin' within my very heart of hearts, you bright-eyed, beautiful darling!"

What more he said or did, it will be unnecessary for me to relate; suffice it to say that the world-renowned talis-

man lost none of its efficacy on this particular occasion. One observation of pretty Nell's, I think is worthy of record. At the close of a most uninteresting conversation, to anybody but themselves, the affectionate girl whispered to him:

"*Dear Ned, you needn't have gone so far!*"

The course of true love sometimes *does* run smooth, a great authority to the contrary, nevertheless, for in about three weeks' time, the chapel bells rang merrily for the wedding of Edward and Nelly. Aye, and what's more, neither of them had ever cause to regret Ned's visit to THE BLARNEY STONE.

THE GOSPEL CHARM.

A FINER looking fellow could not be met with in a day's walk than Gerald Desmond, the only son of the wealthy widow Desmond, her pride and sole comfort; tall and strikingly handsome, he had that buoyant, reckless air and continuous flow of spirits which would indicate the possessor of a heart, over whose welfare the gales of adversity had but lightly swept.

At the period which commences my narrative, he is holding an animated conversation with his foster-brother and fast friend, Frank Carolan. Frank is also a fine, manly specimen of humanity, much more humbly dressed than his companion, yet still with a something of superiority about him, which would prevent a stranger from passing by without a second look. The substance of their conversation may afford a key to their pursuits and feelings.

"Don't talk to me about Biddy Magra. I tell you she's not to be compared to Judy Murphy," said Gerald.

"May-be she isn't, and then again, may-be she is," very logically replied Frank, with the manner of one who did

not exactly like to contradict his superior, or altogether give up his own opinion.

"Did you ever see a prettier girl than Judy?" inquired Gerald.

"Hum! It strikes me that I have, once or twice," said Frank, which was very probable, seeing that he had the prettiest girl in the county for a sister, a fact which Gerald well knew, although, as yet, he hardly dared to acknowledge it to himself.

"No you haven't—you couldn't, there isn't, there shan't be anything to equal her within a hundred miles," continued Gerald, partly for the sake of argument, and partly because he really did think so at the moment. "And if I could only bring myself to abandon the delicious society of the charming sex, and concentrate the affections of Gerald Desmond upon one individual, she would be the enviable person."

"So you've said to every decent-lookin' colleen that came near you ever since you've had a heart to feel. You're as changeable as the moon."

"I was, I was; but now I'm fixed, settled, constant as the sun."

"Mighty like the sun, that has a warm beam for every planet, or may-be more like a parlor stove, that burns up any sort of coal. You'll never be steady to one, Gerald."

"Well, we'll see. I've loved Judy three weeks without stopping, and that's a good sign; but I'm going to have a game at loo, and top up with a jollification; you must come along, Frank."

"No, no, master Gerald; it's well enough for you golden-spoon folks to waste time, but I am one of the unfortunate wooden-ladle people. I must go to work."

"Work! Hang work," cried Gerald, who never suffered an obstacle to remain which opposed his will or pleasure. "You needn't want money while I'm with you, Frank. Come, only this once; deuce take it, let us enjoy the present, and let to-morrow look out for itself. I shan't ask you again—*only this once.*"

"Well, then," said Frank, irresolutely, "I'll go, but remember, 'tis *only for this once.*"

"ONLY FOR THIS ONCE." How often, without thinking of its awful import, has this *lie* been uttered! Let the soul but *for once* diverge from the appointed path, how difficult to return! But when to each seductive voice which beckons from the way-side, the victim cries, I shall enjoy thee *but for once*, 'tis led so far astray, through such deep windings and such adverse mazes, that when it would retrace its steps, the consequences of each evil deed have so obscured, planted with thorns, or destroyed the road, 'tis the finger of infinite mercy alone which can conduct it safely back.

Gerald, Desmond and his foster-brother passed that night, as too many had been passed before, in drunkenness and riot.

Now, although engaged in the same vicious employment, there was great difference in the actuating principles of these two young men. Gerald, as yet unchecked by reason, was at this time an uncompromising *roué*, plunging

in every degree of dissipation, with a heart resolved to drain the cup of enjoyment to the very dregs, and have it filled and filled again. Whereas, Frank's easy, yielding disposition, acted upon by the charm of companionship and the circumstances of the moment, caused him to be placed in such situations, actually against his better judgment; association only leading him into vicious scenes, which a lack of prudential resolution prevented him from being able to avoid. In fact, Gerald invariably said, *yes!* and Frank, had not sufficient self-command to say, *no!*

The strong friendship which frequently attends the adventitious relationship of foster-brotherhood, brought them almost always together, and as Gerald, from his position, was naturally the leader, their lives were passed in a continual round of miscalled amusement.

However, as we often find that when very hear friends quarrel, it is with a bitterness more than equal to their former kindliness of feeling, so it was with Gerald and Frank. They fell out, during one of their drinking encounters; something trivial commenced it, but one word brought on another, until the little spark swelled to a flame, and the poor remains of reason, left uninjured by the liquor, were scorched to fury in the fire of anger. The difference in their dispositions evinced itself powerfully. Gerald, foaming with rage, was violent and ungovernable, while Frank, whose mind was infinitely superior, was cool and calm, though inly suffering from suppressed choler.

"Where," exclaimed the former, dashing his hand on

the table, "where would you have been now, were it not for me?"

"Where?" replied Frank, with a smile which *looked* real; "why, in my bed, dreaming quiet dreams; a thing I shall never do again."

"Whose fault is that?"

"Yours," said Frank, sternly regarding him, "yours. Is this my place? Would I have been here of my own will? No—you led me step by step from content into this brutal degradation."

"But you had your wits about you," fiercely retorted Gerald; "this is my thanks for condescending to make you my companion; the base blood is in you; ingratitude is the sure sign of the low-born."

Frank's cheeks flushed crimson, his teeth ground together, and the blood rushed to his head with a bound; after a moment's pause, he replied, with a terrible effort to be calm, "Gerald Desmond, I am, as you say, low-born, but not base; a son of toil, but no slave; a poor, but still an independent man; nursed in poverty, I own that I am no fit company for you. My hand would bear no comparison with yours; 'tis labor-hardened, while yours is lady-soft, and yet, if our hearts were put into the scale, I mistake much if the overweight would not make up the difference."

Annoyed by the quiet coolness of his manner, Gerald lost all control.

"You poor, miserable child of beggary," he cried, "avoid my sight. Leave me. Dare to cross my path again, and I shall strike you to my feet."

At these words Frank smiled; it was a small but most expressive smile; Gerald felt its influence in his very brain.

"I'll do it now," he screamed, foaming with rage, and springing full at Frank's throat; but he calmly disengaged himself, and with one effort of his tremendous strength, took Gerald up in his powerful arms, and could have dashed him to the ground, but contented himself with quietly replacing him in the chair, exclaiming—

"Learn to forgive, Gerald Desmond, and condescend to accept a lesson from your inferior. Farewell," and ere the other could reply, maddened as he was by rage and mortification, he was gone.

"The ruffian!" savagely exclaimed Gerald. "If I don't wring his heart for this may I inherit everlasting torture."

How he fulfilled his oath we shall see in time.

In no very enviable mood, Frank Carolan sought his humble home; bitterly he repented ever having known Desmond, and firmly he resolved to give up all acquaintance which had grown out of this association, and depend for the future upon his own honest exertions. Brave resolve, seriously and sacredly intended at the time, as all good resolutions usually are.

The only being that Frank cared for in the world was his sister Mary—a bright and beautiful young creature, just bursting into womanhood, graceful as a wild fawn, and as

timid; unselfishly and wholly, with a most absorbing love, he loved *her*. Upon reaching home, he found her in tears, grieving for his prolonged absence, for it was early morning; but the moment he appeared, the rain-drops of sorrow fled, and joy's own bright ray sparkled in her face once more.

"Where have you been so late, dear Frank?" she murmured, as he kissed her dewy eyes.

"Where, I solemnly promise, my own Mary, never to go again."

"You were with Gerald Desmond, were you not?"

"I was! But he and I are brothers, friends, no longer."

"The saints be praised for it," fervently cried his sister. "There is something about Desmond's eyes that frightens me. 'Tis good for neither of us that he should be too near."

"Has he been here, Mary?"

"Oh! yes, several times, but only to inquire for you," she added, hastily.

"You must avoid him, Mary, for he is a serpent; there's a fascination about that man that even I cannot resist. He has destroyed me; lured me from my contented humbleness to taste of luxury; and now, like the beast which has once drunk of blood, 'twill be hard for me to avoid the seductive banquet. Shun him, Mary, for your brother's sake."

"Dear Frank, doubt me not," firmly replied Mary. "If you do fear my womanly weakness, I here swear, by this blessed *Gospel Charm* my mother placed around my neck, before she died, never to do the deed which shall cause her

spirit to frown, or my brother's cheek to glow with shame."

"My bright-eyed, beautiful Mary, I believe you. God bless you, core of my heart; 'tis for your well-doing only I exist," fervently exclaimed Frank. "Go to your rest, darling; 'tis the last time it shall be broken by me; to-morrow shall find me a new man. Good night."

Mary retired, and her brother felt relieved at heart, for a more solemn oath could not be imagined than that which she had sworn. The Gospel Charm, which consists of a text from Scripture, selected and consecrated by the priest, is held to be of peculiar efficacy, and a promise made by it is scarcely ever known to be broken.

No man ever went to bed with a more fixed determination to begin a new and better life on the morrow than did Frank, and yet that very morrow saw his resolution shaken, nay, altogether abandoned. During the night a plan of terrible revenge had been conceived by Gerald Desmond, and to carry out his design, it was necessary that the breach between him and Frank should be apparently healed up.

Frank began the day well, cultivating his little farm, inly rejoicing in his emancipation from evil society, and glowing with that proud self gratification which the exercise of industrious habits ever produces. In the midst of this happy feeling, who should he perceive but Gerald Desmond rapidly approaching? His first impulse was, as usual, right. "I will not listen to him," he thought, retiring in an opposite direction, when he was arrested by the hilarious voice of Gerald calling to him:

"Frank, my friend! my brother, will you not forgive?"

The tones reached into his inmost heart; he paused for an instant, but 'twas enough—Gerald reached him, and, looking cordially in his face, held forth his hand. Frank grasped it earnestly, and ere many moments had elapsed their friendship was renewed, with full sincerity by one, and crafty dissimulation by the other. Alas for good intentions, when unassisted by Heaven's pardoning grace! The vitiating practices of former days were again indulged in, and all Frank's so seemingly virtuous resolutions were drowned in the accursed, soul-enslaving drink.

Some few days after this reconciliation, Gerald took Frank aside, and having first bound him to secrecy, thus began to unfold his design.

"Frank, my boy," said he, "I am in great need of your assistance; will you give it to me?"

"That will I, Gerald," uttered Frank, "with all my heart."

"Nay, but you must promise to do so, even though against your inclination; it is a matter of the most vital moment to me?"

"If I *can* help you, I will."

"Say that you will, for I know you can."

"Well, then, I will, whatever it is."

"Enough. Then you must know that I have a little affair of the heart."

"Another?"

"The last, as I am a true lover; all I want you to do is to write a note for me. I am fearful that my own hand-

writing would be known, added to which, I have disabled my fingers by an accident."

"Yes, but may I not know who the object is?" inquired Frank.

"Come, come, you wouldn't ask that. It would be dishonorable in me to tell you; suffice it to say that she is a lovely creature, young, innocent, and confiding. I have everything arranged to carry her off this very night."

"You mean to marry her, of course?" said Frank, seriously.

"Marry?" laughingly replied Gerald; "come, that's a devilish good joke; do you see any symptoms of insanity about me? No, no, I mean to honor her with my society for a few months, and then"—

"Then cast her off, to the scorn of an uncharitable world. Gerald, friend, pause a moment, think! I know your heart is not entirely rotten."

"My dear fellow, I have thought, reasoned with myself, but all to no avail; one word for all. 'Tis necessary to my happiness that I should possess this girl. You pretend to be my friend; will you prove it by doing this small service for me?"

Good intent said no, but irresolution stepped in as usual, and all was lost.

"Dictate," said Frank, sadly; "'tis sorely against my inclination, but rather than you should doubt my friendship, I *will* do it."

"Good fellow," delightedly exclaimed Gerald; "now, let me see; we must use stratagem. Begin—

"'Dear Mary.'"

At the mention of that name, Frank gave an involuntary shudder. He looked straight into the eyes of Gerald, but they returned his gaze without a change of expression, and the monstrous thought was smothered in its birth.

"Have you written 'Dear Mary?'" said Gerald, calmly.

"I have! go on."

"'Business of a sudden and imperative nature calls me away. I shall need your presence and advice; trust yourself unhesitatingly to the man who delivers this; he is my dearest friend.'"

"Whom is this supposed to come from?" inquired Frank.

"Oh," said Gerald, carelessly, "from her brother."

"Her brother! has she then a brother? God in heaven help *him!* Ah! Gerald, this is frightful; let me entreat of you to abandon your intent; think of the load of misery the indulgence of one evanescent, selfish gratification will entail on all this poor girl's friends;" and Frank knelt and took Gerald's hand in his. For an instant, all the good in the heart of the latter floated to the surface, but he thought of the degradation he had endured, and revenge sank it down again.

"Come, come," he cried, "no more sermons if you please; you have obliged me so much that I can scarcely tell you, and now remain here until I return. I shall not be long; there's a bottle of Inishowen, sugar, lemons, and hot water; make yourself quite at home. Depend upon it, your shall soon be amply repaid for all you have done

for me." So saying, he went out, and Frank was left alone.

Half an hour, an hour, passed away, and Gerald did not return. In spite of himself, sad, fearfully sad thoughts brooded over Frank's spirits. In vain he resorted to the stimulant so lavishly provided for him; the more he drank, the more terrible were the imaginings which crowded into his very heart and brain; at last, unable longer to endure the suspense, and actuated by an impulse for which he could not account, he suddenly started up to return home —what was his surprise to find the door locked? He rushed to the window—it was strongly secured. A vague, indefinite sensation of terror crept through his frame—he was a prisoner, for what purpose—great heaven! if it should be that to which his imagination sometimes pointed, only to be abandoned again from its very intensity of horror. He screamed aloud—echo only answered him. Lost, bewildered, almost bereft of reason, now would he pace rapidly to and fro; now stand stone still. The live-long night he remained in that lonely chamber, a prey to every torture that could reach the soul of man—minutes swelled into days, a long year of common-place existence was compressed into those few hours. He prayed, cursed, raved alternately, nor could the fearful quantity he drank drown reason in forgetfulness. Slowly the dim grey of morning began to break—anon, the gleesome lark flew upward to greet the sun with his matin song, and yet no sign of Gerald. The door was at last unlocked—Frank rushed through, and with instinctive dread sought his

home. Scarcely pausing to draw breath, in a state of utter exhaustion he reached the cottage, burst open the door, and flew into the room—it was empty!

"Mary, Mary!" he cried, in choking accents, but her soft voice did not reply; looking round, his eye suddenly rested on an open letter; it was his—most completely had the fiend triumphed. At his own suggestion, the being to whom his very soul was linked had given herself up to the power of the seducer. The following words were written in pencil on the outside:—

'She's mine, willingly mine, thanks to thy kindly help.
Physician, cure thyself—now '*Learn to forgive.*'
"GERALD."

It having been shown that Gerald's diabolical scheme, so far as the abduction went, was carried out with entire success, pass we now a month. Gerald has established himself in the capital, having provided Mary with an elegant suite of apartments, under the same roof with himself, although not immediately adjoining. His behavior to her was studiously kind, tempered with thorough respect; hoping by such means slowly and insiduously to reach his aim through the medium of her own affection.

Poor Mary herself hardly dared to think; for her temperament was of that soft and womanly nature, which rendered it impossible for her to contend energetically against the assaults of the world—that most beautiful of all female characteristics, which is content to look up to and to reverence, yearning for some natural support and

protection, and clinging to it when discovered with an enduring tenacity, only to be found in such a woman's love.

To all her inquiries concerning Frank, Gerald answered evasively, but to her satisfaction; still treating her with the greatest possible show of reserve and kindness, his manner imperceptibly increasing in fervor day by day—letting it be inferred more by his looks than words that she was dearer to him than he dared to acknowledge. The consequence of this specious manœuvering began gradually to make itself evident in the state of Mary's feelings. Now she involuntary hoped for his coming—seriously deploring his departure; his fiend-like intent was in a fair way to be completed, when his own impetuosity destroyed the vile fabric. Encouraged by her quiet, passive manner, he ventured prematurely to unfold his guilty purpose. Who can describe the terrible revulsion of feeling which took place in Mary's soul when the full certainty of his guilty design was made apparent? With a mighty effort she checked the burning flood of passion which swelled up from her heart, and subduing herself into perfect calmness, listened to his infamous proposal. A deep hectic glow on each cheek, and a slight difficulty in respiration only evidencing her intense emotion. What more he said she knew not—heard not—for while he was pouring forth some wild rhapsody she was in deep communion with her soul. Construing her submissive silence advantageously to himself, he quitted the apartment. The instant he left her presence, the pent up current of her

feelings burst all bounds. She flung herself upon her knees and wept a prayer of agony—the helpless, almost hopeless appeal of innocence within the very grasp of vice; kissing her mother's gift, the Gospel Charm, she bathed it in tears, imploring it to save her from this dreadful crisis. This outpouring of her spirit calmed and soothed her, for in her extremity there came a thought of safety. To think was to resolve, and ere many moments had elapsed, with a firm reliance on the help of a merciful Providence, Mary quitted the house. It was nearly midnight—dark and bitterly cold—yet she cared not for the darkness—felt not the chilling blast; unknown and friendless, she knew not where to go, but wandered street after street, satisfied that she was away from him who had so cruelly insulted her. Hurrying on, she knew not whither, she suddenly came in contact with a well-known form; recoiling a step or two, they gazed on each other for an instant. 'Twas thus met the brother and his sister. That chance which he had hungered for, week after week, had occurred at last; seizing her in a nervous gripe, Frank dragged her to the nearest lamp. "Mary," he exclaimed, in a voice trembling from suppressed passion, a wild fire flashing from his eyes, "are you still worthy to be called my sister?"

"Brother, I am," meekly replied Mary.

"You are not *his* cast-away?"

"No! by my mother's dying gift."

"To a merciful God be all the praise," fervently cried Frank, as he folded her to his heart with a thrill of rapture.

"My own blessed, sorely-tempted lamb! But where is he? Come, show me where to find him. He shall not escape. 'Tis no fault of his, curse him, that you are not foul as sin; lead me to the place."

"Not now, dear Frank," touchingly exclaimed Mary. "Perhaps I may have feared more wrong than was intended. Who is there amongst us that can say, I have never harbored an evil design? Let us be thankful that the wicked hour is passed, and leave the punishment in *His* power whose province it is to judge the hearts of men."

"Do you forgive him?"

"From my inmost soul, and more for his sake than my own, rejoice that his bad design is unaccomplished."

"You love him, then?" fiercely inquired Frank.

Mary was silent.

"The snake—the fiend—had you not been all angel, the specious villain would have succeeded. Mary, I will, I must see him; if I do not give my burning thoughts an utterance, they will consume my very heart."

"Let it be to-morrow, then, dear Frank."

"Be it so. Come, dear one, I have still a home for you; a pure, though lowly one. Had you been guilty, tempted as you were, your brother's arms would never have closed against you; but now your triumphant innocence will bless with happiness our frugal meal, and make your humble couch a bed of flowers.

Upon the morrow Frank redeemed his word. With a heart thirsting for revenge he sought Gerald's apartment,

but did not meet there the bold, reckless libertine that he expected. Throwing himself at Frank's very feet, in wild but heart-uttered tones, Gerald cried:

"I know why you have come, but she has left me; know you anything of her? Oh! for heaven's sake relieve my anxiety—you have not harmed her—upon me, wreak all your vengeance, for I deserve it, but she is pure, pure as the spotless snow. My base, black-hearted villainy has recoiled upon myself. I would have destroyed her, and am myself destroyed if she is lost to me. Say but that she is safe, and I'll coin my very heart for her and you."

Softened, subdued by the now evident sincerity of Gerald's manner, Frank assured him of her safety.

"I thank thee, merciful heaven," fervently cried Gerald, "that one sin more damning than the rest is spared my guilty soul. Mary, beloved Mary, 'tis thy angelic virtue which has crushed the fiend-spirit that has hitherto controlled my sense. 'Tis she, and she only can protect and guide the heart which her innocence has reclaimed."

"What do you mean, Gerald?"

"That if she will receive in marriage this guilty but repentant wretch, it may be that the destroyer shall have one victim the less. Frank, dare I to call you once more brother? Intercede for me, will you not? The happiness of my life, nay, the sole hope of my eternal soul rests now with her."

Gerald's repentance having been proved sincere, it was not long ere Mary yielded a heartful assent to his proposition, and as Frank at the holy altar delivered her over to

the sweet custody of a husband, his heart whispered to him that he was now tasting most exquisite revenge. The sacred influence of a virtuous love haloed the after lives of Gerald and Mary with content most ample, and, although her state was changed from humility to comparative affluence, she never laid aside her mother's parting gift, but regarding it as her protection in the hour of danger, still cherished near her heart THE GOSPEL CHARM.

THE TEST OF BLOOD.

"Thou shalt do no murder."

"You won't dance with me, Kathleen?"

"No, Luke, I will not."

"For what reason?"

"I don't choose it. Besides, I'm engaged to Mark Dermot."

The above, very slight conversation in itself, was to the individuals, full of the greatest import. To explain it, it will be necessary to take a Parthian glance at our subject. Kathleen Dwyer was the pretty, spoiled, village pet, with quite sufficient vanity to know that the preference was deserved. Every young man in the place was anxious to pay court to her, and sooth to say, she impartially dispensed her smiles to all, reserving, it must be admitted, her more serious thoughts for one alone. That one was Luke Bryant, and as he really loved her, the flightiness of her conduct, and her interminable flirtations gave him very great uneasiness. Often and often would he reason with her, imploring her to dismiss the crowd of purposeless suitors that ever fluttered round, and select one, even though that selection would doom him to misery.

"No, no!" the little madcap would say, with a bright smile, "I cannot give up altogether the delight of having so many male slaves in my train; they are useful, and if you don't like it you know your remedy."

"But do you think it is right?" he would say; "suppose there may be some, even one who loves you truly, to lead him on by the false light of your encouraging smile, to perish at last?"

"Pshaw!" would she answer, "men are not made of such perishable stuff."

"Well, well, Kathleen, have a care; if any one of your numerous admirers feels towards you as I do, to lose you would be the loss of everything."

As may be reasonably supposed, these conversations usually ended in a little tiff, when the wild, good-hearted, but giddy-headed girl would select some one from her surrounding beaux, to play off against Luke; generally pitching upon the person most likely to touch his feelings to the very quick; herself, the while, I must do her the justice to say, quite as miserable if not more so, than her victim.

And now to return, let me describe the individual whom she has this time chosen to inflict torture upon her lover, and I think you will agree with me that he has cause for more than discontent.

Mark Dermot, or, as he was most generally denominated, Black Mark, was one of those persons we sometimes meet with in the world, on whom prepossessing appearance and great natural ability are bestowed, only to be put to the basest possible uses. Character he had none, except of the

very worst kind; his ostensible pursuit was smuggling, but crimes of the darkest nature were freely whispered about him, and yet, in spite of all this, his dashing dare-devil nature and indomitable impudence, enabled him to show himself in places where, although his evil reputation was well known, he was tolerated either from supineness, or more likely from the fear of his enmity.

It is not to be wondered at then, that as Luke stood by and saw this ruffian carry off his soul's beloved, his very heart should quake from apprehension. He was unaware until this moment that she ever knew him, and his feelings, as ever and anon Mark would seem to whisper something in Kathleen's ear, to which she would seem to smile an approval, can only be imagined by such of my readers, if any there be, who have seen another feeding upon smiles which they would fain monopolize.

Jealousy of the most painful nature took possession of Luke; he had often experienced sensations of annoyance before, but never to this extent. Her fame—her character—were compromised; for he knew Black Mark to be the very worst description of man for a woman to come in contact with at all, caring nothing for the ties of morality, or for the world's opinion—reckless, bad-hearted, and moreover uncomfortably handsome in the eyes of a lover.

The dance now over, Luke imagined that she would give up her partner and join him; but no, the silly girl seemed proud of her conquest, and to take a sort of mad delight in wounding Luke's feelings to the uttermost. She approached the spot where Luke with folded arms was stand-

ing, and leaning familiarly upon the arm of Mark, said laughingly:

"Why don't you dance, Luke? Come, I'll find a partner for you."

Galled to the very quick, Luke answered with asperity—"Thank you, Miss Dwyer, you have found one for yourself, and"—looking at Black Mark, as a jealous lover only can look—"you'll pardon me, but I don't like the sample."

Mark regarded him with a scowl of the deepest malignity, while Kathleen, the real feelings of her heart kept down by coquetry, exclaimed with a laugh:—

"Don't mind him, Mark, he's only jealous, poor fellow. Come, will you not dance again?"

"Aye, and again, and for ever," impetuously replied Mark; "Come."

And as they went to rejoin the dancers, Kathleen caught the expression of Luke's features, and there saw so much misery depicted, that she would have given worlds to have recalled her words. She yearned to implore his forgiveness, but her insatiable appetite for admiration restrained her. "Never mind," thought she, "when the dance is over, I can easily make it up with him," and away she went, thinking no more about it.

At the conclusion of the dance, her better feelings all predominating, she quitted Mark and rushed over to the place where Luke had been standing, but he was gone; with that unfeeling speech rankling in his heart, he had left. It was now her turn to be miserable; not all the soft speeches that were poured into her ear had power to

console her, but her annoyance was at its height when Black Mark, presuming upon the encouragement which she had given him, seated himself beside her, and in ardent language declared himself her passionate lover. Poor, unthinking Kathleen, she had evoked a spirit which she had not power to quell.

It was more than a week after, before Luke could bring himself to venture near Kathleen; but finding that each succeeding day only made him still more wretched, he determined to know his fate at once, and with a sorely palpitating heart he neared her abode, lifted the latch, and entered; the first sight that met his eyes was Mark and Kathleen, sitting near to each other, the deep blush that crimsoned her to the very throat, evinced to Luke the interesting nature of their conversation. She could not speak, neither could he, but giving her one look which sank into her very brain, he left the place; in vain she called after him, he turned but once—a deep curse was on his lips but his noble heart refused to sanction it. "Farewell, beloved Kathleen," he cried, while bitter tears flowed fast as he spoke, "May the good God protect you now, for you will need it." And Luke rapidly strode towards the village, inly determining to go to sea on the morrow, and never look upon her or his loved home again.

Meanwhile, Kathleen, apprehensive that he would do something desperate, implored Mark to follow and bring him back. With a contemptuous sneer, he answered, "Do you think I'm a fool? No, no! Kathleen, you've gone too far with me to retract now. The world sees and

knows our intimacy; the only barrier to our happiness was your foolish lover, Luke—he has taken the sulks, and gone away—our road is now clear. I love you better than a hundred such milk-sops as he could, so come—say the word!"

"That word," replied Kathleen, firmly, "shall never be said by me."

"Have a care, girl!" fiercely retorted Mark, "I'm not a man to be trifled with; you have led me to believe that you liked me, and you *shall* redeem the pledge your eyes at least have given."

"Never! Mark Dermot, never!" exclaimed Kathleen, rising from her seat; but with a fierce gesture, and a determined fire in his eye, Mark forced her down again, saying, in a clear, but terribly earnest manner: "Kathleen, from my youth up, I never allowed the slightest wish of my soul to be thwarted; think you that I shall submit to be led or driven, coaxed near, or sent adrift, at the caprice of any living thing?—no! if you can't be mine from love, you shall from fear; for," ratifying his threat by a fearful oath, "no obstacle shall exist between me and my desire."

"What mean you, Mark Dermot?" cried the terrified girl.

"No matter," he replied, "the choice rests with you. You cannot deny that your manner warranted me in soliciting your hand. Remember, love and hate dwell very near each other—the same heart contains them both. Be mine, and every wish of your soul shall be anticipated—refuse me, and tremble at the consequences."

"Heaven forgive, and help me," inly prayed Kathleen, as the result of her weak conduct now made itself so awfully apparent. Thinking to enlist some good feeling from Mark's generosity, she frankly acknowledged to him that her affections were entirely bestowed upon the absent Luke.

She knew not the demon-heart in which she had trusted; instead of inclining him to mercy, her words only inflamed him into tenfold rage.

"Vile woman!" he exclaimed, starting to his feet. "Have you then been making a scoff and jest—a plaything and a tool of me? Better for you had you raised a fiend than tampered with me thus. How know I that you do not lie, even now, woman-devil? One word for all!—by your eternal hope, who is it that you do love?"

"On my knees—Luke Bryant," fervently said Kathleen."

"Then wo to ye both!" cried Mark, casting her rudely from him, and, with a look of intense hate, rushing from the cottage.

There was a perfect tempest of rage in Mark's breast, as he quitted Kathleen; plans of revenge, deadly and horrible, suggested themselves to him, and he nursed the devilish feeling within his heart until every humanizing thought was swallowed up in the anticipation of a sweeping revenge. On reaching the village, his first care was to find Luke; upon seeing him, he started as though a serpent stood in his path.

"Keep away from me, Mark Dermot," he sternly

exclaimed. "If you are come to triumph in your success, be careful, for there may be danger in it."

"Luke," replied the other, in a sad tone, "we are rivals no longer. Nay, listen, I bring you good news, there are not many who would have done this; but what care I now—the fact is, like a sensible man, I am come to pro claim my own failure. Kathleen has refused me."

"She has?"

"As true as I'm alive—rejected me for you, Luke. Nay, as good as told me that she merely flirted with me to fix your chains the tighter. Cunning little devil—eh, Luke? Come, you'll shake hands with me now, I know."

"If I could believe you, Mark," said Luke, the joy dancing in his very eyes.

"I tell you she acknowledged to me that she never could love any one but you. Now am I not a generous rival, to carry his mistress's love to another? She requested me to ask you to call in this morning, if you would have conclusive proof of her sincerity, and you would then find that *she could never use you so again.* But now 'tis getting late, and as I have delivered my message, I shall leave you to dream of Kathleen and happiness. Good night—be sure and see her in the morning;" and they parted.

Soon afterwards, Luke missed his clasp-knife with which he had been eating his supper, but, after a slight search, thought no more of the matter, his very soul glowing with renewed delight at the thought of seeing his loved one on

the morrow—that their differences should be made up, and all again be sunshine.

About an hour after, as he was preparing to retire for the night, it suddenly occurred to him that he would like to take a walk towards Kathleen's cottage—perchance he should see her shadow on the curtain—he might hear her sweet voice—no matter, to gaze upon the home that contained her would at least be something; so off he started in that direction, a happy feeling pervading his every sense. Arrived within sight of her abode, he fancied he heard a stifled groan, but his thoughts, steeped in joy, dwelt not on it. In a moment after, a distinct and fearful scream, as of one in agony, burst on the stillness of the night. It came from the direction of Kathleen's cottage. Inspired with a horrible fear, he ran wildly forward—another, and another terrible scream followed; there was no longer doubt—it was the voice of his Kathleen. With mad desperation, he reached the place just in time to see the figure of a man, who, in the doubtful light, he could not recognize, rush from the door and disappear in darkness. In breathless horror Luke entered. Great Heaven! what a sight met his eyes. His beloved Kathleen lay on the blood-dabbled floor, in the last agony of departing nature, her beating heart pierced with many wounds; she saw and evidently recognized Luke, for 'mid the desperate throes of ebbing life, she clutched his hand in hers, essaying, but in vain, to articulate—she could but smile; her eye glazed over—her hand relaxed its grasp—and with her gentle head rest-on his breast, her spirit passed away.

All this was so sudden and fearfully unexpected to Luke, that he scarcely knew 'twas reality, until several of the surrounding neighbors, who had been alarmed by the outcry, came hastily in.

"See!" cried one, "'Tis as I thought; murder has been done."

"And here is the fatal instrument with which it has been effected," said another, as he picked up a gory knife from the floor. It caught the eye of Luke. "That knife is mine," said he, in the measured tone of one stricken down by terrible calamity.

"Yours?" they all exclaimed at once. "Then you have murdered her?"

Luke only smiled—a ghastly, soul-crushed smile, most awful to look upon at such a time; his heart was too full for words. Reason, which had been dethroned by this unexpected blow, had scarcely yet returned to its seat, for all unconsciously he still held the lifeless form tightly clasped in his arms, gazing, with a sort of stony expression, upon the face of her who had been to him the world.

It was not until they approached to seize him for killing *her*, that he seemed to be thoroughly aware of his position.

"What would you do, friends?" said he, mournfully, as they endeavored to force him away. "Would you deny me the sad comfort of dying in her presence?"

"Have you not murdered her, wretch?" cried one of the by-standers.

"What!—murder *her*—God in heaven forbid," he exclaimed.

"Is not this your knife?"

"It is!"

"And how came it here—if not used by you—in this unknown manner?"

"It was stolen from me by that arch-demon, Mark Dermot," said Luke, shuddering to the very heart, as he mentioned that name.

"That has got to be proved," cried one of the crowd, who happened to be a friend of Mark's, "we can't take your bare word for it. Let him be secured."

But Luke needed no securing. Listlessly he suffered them to pinion his arms; and in the same room with the precious casket which once contained his heart's treasure, he abided the remainder of the night, in a state of mental torture utterly incapable of being rendered into words.

The morning after this awful occurrence, a coroner's jury was summoned, and the identity of the knife having been proved, added to his own admission, and the fact of his having had a quarrel with her the day before being testified to, every circumstance tended to fix the guilt upon him; a verdict was delivered accordingly, and Luke Bryant stood charged with the murder of one for whom he would willingly have shed his last drop of blood.

With a degree of effrontery consonant with his general character, Black Mark made his appearance amongst the spectators who attended the inquiry, and was loudest in denunciation against the supposed criminal. It only remained now for the accused, who had been removed during the inquest, to be brought into the chamber of death, pre-

viously to the warrant being drawn out for his final committal, to be tried at the ensuing quarter sessions. He was conducted into the room; with a listless, apathetic gaze he looked around him mechanically, for he cared not now what fate might do to him, when suddenly his eyes rested on Mark Dermot. The consciousness of everything that had taken place seemed all to flash through his brain at once.

"Murderer!" he cried. "Can it be that Heaven's lightning slumbers! Friends!—behold that fiend; who, not content with the life's blood of one victim, now comes to triumph in a double murder!"

"What means the fool?" contemptuously exclaimed Mark. "Does he suppose that reasoning men will credit his ravings, or help him to shift his load of crime upon another's shoulders?"

"As I am a living man—as there is a just God who knows the secrets of all hearts, there stands the murderer, Mark Dermot!" solemnly replied Luke. "It is not for myself I care, for Heaven knows that I would rather die than bear about this load of misery; but that he should brave the angels with a shameless brow, he whose hands are crimsoned with her precious blood—it is too much!—too much!"

"Then, Luke Bryant," said the coroner, "you deny having committed this crime?"

"On my knees—before the throne of mercy—I do!"

"I trust, then, that you may cause a jury of your countrymen to believe so; but for me, I have only one duty to

perform, and circumstances clearly bear me out in my assumption. I must send you to trial!"

"At this juncture, one of the jurymen, who thought he could perceive a meaning in Mark's peculiar, ill-concealed glance of savage delight, begged to be heard: keeping his eye steadily fixed on Mark's face, he said, with solemnity:

"When the judgment of man is in perplexity as to the author of crimes like these, the aid of Heaven may well be solicited, that it might be mercifully pleased to give some indication by which the innocent might be prevented from suffering for the guilty. We have an old tradition here, that if the accused lays his right hand upon the breast of the corpse, swearing upon the Holy Gospel that he had no act or part in the deed, speaking truly, no results will follow; but if he swears falsely, the dead itself will testify against him; for the closed wounds will re-open their bloody mouths, and to the confusion of the guilty one, the stream of life will flow once more for a short space! It seems to me that this is a case in which *The Test of Blood* might be applied not vainly."

"Willingly!—most willingly will I abide the test," exclaimed Luke.

"And you?" said the juror, with a penetrating glance at Mark.

"I!" said the latter, with an attempt at recklessness, "What is it to me?—why should I be subject to such mummery—who accuses me?"

"I do!" thundered Luke, "and I now insist upon his going through the trial—myself will point out the way."

So saying, he approached the lifeless body, and sinking on his knees, laid his right hand reverently on the heart, saying—

"My blessed angel! if thy spirit lingers near, thou knowest that this hand would rather let my life-blood forth, than offer thee the shadow of an injury!"

They waited an instant—all was quiet; meantime, Mark, persuading himself that it was but a form, and yet trembling to the very core, advanced. All eyes were upon him; he paused—cast a glance around, and grinding his teeth savagely, cried out:

"Why do you all fix your gaze on me? I'm not afraid to do this piece of folly." He advanced another step—again he hesitated; heartless—brutal—though he was, the spell of a mighty dread was on his soul. His face grew livid; the blood started from his lips; large round drops burst from his forehead and rolled down his ashy cheeks. At last, with a tremendous effort, he knelt, and attempted to stretch forth his hand—it seemed glued to his side. Starting to his feet again, he cried fiercely:

"I will not do it—why should I?"

"You cannot!—you dare not!" solemnly ejaculated Luke. "If you are guiltless, why should you fear?"

"Fear!" screamed the other, "I fear neither man nor devil—dead nor living," suddenly placing his hand upon the breast of the dead!

"See—see!" cried Luke, wildly, "the blood mounts up—it overflows!"

"It's a lie!" madly exclaimed Mark.

But it was no lie; the ruddy stream welled upward through those gaping wounds, and flowed once more adown her snowy breast, a murmur of awe and surprise breaking from the assembled group; whilst shivering to the very heart, the terrors of discovered guilt and despair seized upon Mark.

"Curse ye all!" he roared. "You would juggle my life away; but you shall find I will not part with it so readily." Hastily drawing a pistol, it was instantly wrested from him. Several of the bystanders flung themselves upon him; but the desperate resistance which he made, added to the frightful internal agony which he had just endured, caused him to break a blood-vessel; and in raving delirium, the hardened sinner's soul wended to its last account in the presence of those whom, in his reckless villainy, he had expected to destroy.

Wonder succeeded wonder; and the mystery was soon discovered to be no mystery at all, but the natural instrument in the hands of Providence to confound the guilty. As relapsing into his former listlessness, Luke was intently gazing on the body of his beloved, suddenly his heart gave one tremendous throb.

"Hush!" he exclaimed, with anxious, trembling voice; "For Heaven's love, be silent for an instant! I thought I heard a sound like—Ha! there it is again—a gasp—a gentle sob, and scarcely audible, but distinct as thunder within my soul—there's warmth about her breast—her eyelids tremble. The God of Mercy be thanked!—she lives—she lives!" and Luke sunk upon his knees; a copi-

ous flood of tears, the first he had ever shed, relieved his overcharged feelings.

It was true—she did live; from loss of blood only had she fainted, and the excessive weakness had thus far prolonged the insensibility; none of the stabs had reached a vital part, and it was the first effort of nature to resume its suspended functions which had caused the blood once more to circulate, just at the instant which so signally established the guilt of the intended murderer.

It only remains for me to say that Mark Dermot's previous bad character prevented much sympathy being felt for a fate so well deserved. In process of time Luke's devoted love was well rewarded. Kathleen recovered from the effects of her wounds—gave him her hand, and profiting by the terrible lesson which she had received, made an estimable, virtuous, and affectionate wife.

THE MORNING DREAM.

The dream of the night, there's no reason to rue,
But the dream of the morning is sure to come true.
OLD SAYING.

PRETTY Peggy May; a bright-eyed, merry-hearted, little darling you are, Peggy! there's no gainsaying that fact; a cunning little gipsy, and most destructive too, as many an aching heart can testify. But who can blame *thee* for that? as well might the summer's sun be blamed for warming the sweet flowers into life. It is a natural ordination that all who see you should love you.

Pretty Peg has just completed her eighteenth year; in the heedless gaiety of youth, she has hitherto gambolled through the road of life, without a grief, almost without a thought. Oh! for the sunny days of childhood, ere, wedded to experience, the soul brings forth its progeny of cares. Why can we not add the knowledge of our wiser years, and linger over that most blessed, least prized period of our existence, when every impulse is at once obeyed, and the ingenuous soul beams forth in smiles, its every working indexed in the face—ere Prudence starts up like a spectre, and cries out: "Beware! there is a prying world that watches every turn, and does not always make a true report." Prudence! how I hate the cold, calculating,

heartless phrase. Be loyal in word, be just in act, be honest in all; but Prudence! 'tis twin-brother to Selfishness, spouse of Mistrust, and parent of Hypocrisy! But, methinks I hear some one say, "This is a most cavalierly way of treating one of the cardinal virtues"—to which I reply, "It certainly has, by some means or another, sneaked in amongst the virtues, and thereby established a right to the position; but it is the companionship only which makes it respectable, and it must be accompanied by *all the rest* to neutralize its mischievous tendency."

But what has all this to do with Peggy and her dreams? Pshaw! don't be impatient—we are coming to that If you have taken the slightest interest in little Peg, prepare to sympathize in her first heart-deep sorrow. She is in love! Now, if she herself were questioned about the matter, I'm pretty sure she would say it's no such thing; but I take upon myself to declare it to be true, and for fear you should think that I make an assertion which I cannot substantiate, permit me to relate the substance of a conversation which took place between Peg and her scarcely less pretty, but infinitely more mischievous cousin, Bridget O'Conner. They had just returned from one of those gregarious merry-meetings, where some spacious granary, just emptied of its contents, gives glorious opportunity for the gladsome hearts of the village, and "all the country round" to meet and astonish the rats—sleek, well-fed rascals, dozing in their holes—with uproarious fun and revelry.

A sudden, and indeed, under the circumstances, extremely significant sigh from Peg, startled Bridget from the little

glass where she was speculating as to how she looked, for the last hour or two. I may as well say the scrutiny was perfectly satisfactory—she had not danced all her curls out.

"Gracious me!" she exclaimed, "Peg, how you *do* sigh!"

"And no wonder," rejoined Peggy, with a slight squeeze of acid, "after having danced down twenty couple twenty times, I should like to know who wouldn't!"

"Ah! but that wasn't a tired sigh, Peg. I know the difference; one needn't dive as low as the *heart* for them; a tired sigh comes flying out upon a breath of joy, and turns into a laugh before it leaves the lips; you are sad, Peg!"

"How you talk; why, what on earth should make me sad?"

"That's exactly what I want to know; now there's no use in your trying to laugh, for you can't do it. Do you think I don't know the *difference* between a laugh and that nasty deceitful croak?".

"Bridget!" exclaimed Peg, with a look which she intended should be very severe and very reproachful, "I'm sleepy."

"Well, then, kiss me, and go to bed," replied Bridget. "Ho! ho!" thought she, "there's something curious about Peg to-night. I think what I think, and if I think right, I'm no woman if I don't find out before I sleep." Craftily she changed the conversation, abused the women's dresses, and criticised their complexions, especially the pretty ones. At last, when she had completely lulled the commotion of

Peg's thoughts into a calm, she suddenly cried out: "Oh! Peg, I forgot to tell you, that one of the boys we danced with had his leg broke coming home to-night!"

Peggy, surprised into an emotion she found it impossible to conceal, started up, pale as snow, and gasped out:

"Who was it—who?"

Ha! ha! thought the other, the fox is somewhere about—now to beat the cover.

"Did you hear me ask you who?" said Peg, anxiously.

"I did, dear," replied Bridget, "but I'm trying to recollect. I think," and she looked steadily into Peggy's eyes, "I think it was Ned Riley." Peg didn't even wink.

She doesn't care about him, and I'm not sorry for that, thought Bridget, thereby making an acknowledgment to herself, which the sagacious reader will no doubt interpret truly.

"No, it wasn't Ned," she continued, "now I think of it, it was—it was—a"—

"Who? who?" cried Peg, now sensibly agitated, "do tell me, there's a dear."

Not she, not a bit of it, but lingered with feminine ingenuity, now making as though she recollected the name, and then with a shake of her head, pretending to dive back into memory, just as the inquisitors of old used to slacken the torture, to enable the recipient to enjoy another dose.

"Now I have it," said she, "no, I haven't; I do believe I've forgotten who it was, but this I know, it was the pleasantest-mannered and nicest young fellow in the whole heap."

"Then it *must* have been Mark!" exclaimed Peg, throwing prudence overboard, and fixing her large, eloquent eyes full on Bridget's mouth, as if her everlasting fate depended upon the little monosyllable about to issue from it.

"It *was* Mark! that *was* the name!"

Peggy gave a gasp, while Bridget went on, with a triumphant twinkle in her wicked little eye which did not show over-favorably for her humanity.

"*Mark Brady!*" dwelling on the name with slow, distinct emphasis, which made Peggy's heart jump at each word as though she had received an electric shock.

She knew the tenderest part of the sentient anatomy, Bridget did, and took intense delight in stabbing exactly there; not mortal stabs, *that* would be mercy, but just a little too far for tickling. That sort of a woman was Bridget, who, if possessed of an incumbrance in husband shape, would take infinite pains to discover the weakest points in his temper, and industriously attack those quarters, piling up petty provocations, one upon another; none in themselves of sufficient importance to induce a sally, but making altogether a breastwork of aggravation, that must at last o'ertop the wall of temper. And if the unfortunate besieged don't take his hat, and make a not very honorable retreat, philosophy will be obliged to strike its flag, the signal for a civil war, which, like all such unnatural conflicts, strikes at the root of all domestic comfort, and whichever side may remain the victors, the trophy is a home destroyed.

But to return to Peg, for whose benefit I have indulged

in the foregoing rather spiteful digression, in order that she might have time to recover herself; or rather, I should say, to be thoroughly conscious of the extent of her unhappiness. Remember, 'tis her first grief, so pardon its intensity. Phantoms of crutches and of wooden legs came crowding on her imagination, contrasting themselves with the curious agility with which poor Mark had "*beat the floor*" in the merry jig, until he made it echo to every note of the pipes. Then rose up vague spectres of sanguinary-minded surgeons, with strange butcherly instruments; then she saw nothing but fragmentary Marks, unattached legs, a whole room-full dancing by themselves; there they were, twisting and twirling about, in the various difficult complications of the "toe and heel," "double shuffle," "ladies' delight," and "cover the buckle;" she shut her eyes in horror, and was sensible of nothing but a gloomy blood-red. There's no knowing to what lengths her terrible fancies might have gone, had they not been dispersed like wreaths of vapor by a hearty laugh from the mischievous Bridget. Peggy opened her eyes in astonishment. Was she awake? Yes, there was her cousin enjoying one of the broadest, merriest, wickedest laughs that ever mantled over the face of an arch little female.

"Poor Mark!" she cried, and then burst forth again into ringing laughter, which dimpled her crimson cheeks like—what shall I say?—like a fine healthy-looking cork-red potatoe, an Irish simile, I must say; but had we seen Bridget, and were acquainted with the features of the aforesaid esculent, I'm pretty certain you would acknowledge its aptness.

"What in the name of gracious are you laughing at?" exclaimed Peggy, a gleam of hope breaking on the darkness of her thought.

"Why, that you should take on so, when I told you Mark had broken his leg," gaily replied Bridget.

"Hasn't he?"

"Not half as much as your poor little heart would have been broken if he had," said the tormentor.

"Bridget! Cousin!" said poor Peg, now enduring much more pain from the sudden revulsion of feeling, "you should not have done this; you have crowded a whole life-time of agony in those few moments past."

"Well, forgive me, dear Peggy. I declare I didn't know that you had the affection so strong on you, or I wouldn't have joked for the world. But now, confess, doesn't it serve you right, for not confiding in me, your natural born cousin? Did I ever keep a secret from you? Didn't I tell you all about Pat Finch, and Johnny Magee, and Jack, the hurler, eh?"

"But not one word about Edward Riley, with whom you danced so often to-night," observed Peg, with a very pardonable dash of malice.

It was now Bridget's turn to change color, as she stammered out, "I—I was going to, not that I care much about *him;* no, no, Mark is the flower of the flock, and I've a mighty great mind to set my cap at him myself."

Peggy smiled, a very small, but a peculiar, and it might have been, perfectly self-satisfied smile, as she replied: "Try, Miss Bridget, and I wish you success."

'Truth is scarce when liars are near," said Bridget.

"But I say, Peg, does Mark know you love him so hard?"

"Don't be foolish; how should he?"

"Did you never tell him?"

"What do you take mé for?"

"Did he never tell *you?*"

"What do you take *him* for?"

"For a man, and moreover a conceited one; don't you mean to let him know his good fortune?"

"It isn't leap year, and if it was, I'd rather die than do such a thing," said Peggy!

"Come, I'll bet you a new cap, that I mean to wear at your wedding, you *will* let him know the state of your feelings, and that, before a week is over your head," provokingly replied Bridget.

Peggy, said nothing. Prudent Peg.

"Is it a bet?"

"Yes, yes, anything, but go to sleep, or we shan't get a wink to-night."

"True for you, cousin, for it's *to-morrow* already! Look at the daybreak, how it has frightened our candle, until its almost as pale as your cheek."

"Good night, Bridget."

"Good night, dear Peg, don't forget to remember your dreams. Recollect it's morning, now, and whatever we dream, *is sure to come true.*"

Before she slept, Bridget formed a project in her mind to ensure the winning of her bet. What it was, it will be time enough to find out by-and-by.

Very early in the day, Mark Brady and Ned called to inquire after the health of their respective partner. It so happened that Bridget received them; and very quickly, for she was one of those tyrants in love who make their captives feel their chains, on some frivolous pretence or another, dismissed her swain and began to develop her plot with Mark.

Now, Mark, I may as well tell you now as at any other time, was a very favorable specimen of a class I regret to say, not over numerous in Ireland; a well to-do farmer, his rent always ready, his crops carefully gathered, and a trifle put by yearly, so that he enjoyed that most enviable condition in life, "a modest competence." As to his personal appearance, there's scarcely any occasion to describe that, for, with the exception of one individual, I don't suppose he has a feature or characteristic which would be considered by any one at all uncommon or interesting. Suffice it to say, Mark was a *man!* A volume of eulogy could not say more.

And, moreover, Mark *did* love pretty Peggy May; with a whole-hearted, manly, and unselfish love, he loved her. I tell you this, dear reader, in order that you may not waste time in speculating on the subject of Mark's thoughts, as he sat silent and fidgety, a passive victim to the mischievous Bridget, who, shrewd little puss, knew every turn of his mind as though imprinted on his face; and for the matter of that, so they were, in nature's own characters, type most readable.

Mark was apparently very busy, sketching imaginary

somethings on the floor with his blackthorn stick, and seemingly unconscious of Bridget's presence, when she suddenly interrupted his revery by saying:

"A penny for your thoughts, Mr. Brady!"

"Eh! what!" he replied, blushing 'till it fairly stung his cheek like a million of needles. "A penny, is it, Miss? faith, an' it's *dear* they'd be at that same."

"And what might you be thinking of, may I ask, Mr. Mark?" said Bridget, accompanying the question with one of her very sweetest smiles.

"Just nothing at all, Miss," replied Mark.

"'Nothing!' then they *would* be '*dear*,' and that's true Mark; but supposing, now," she continued, archly; "I only say, supposing it happened to be your sweetheart you were thinking of, you might find another meaning for that same little word!"

Mark felt as though he had been detected in some fault, as he replied, sketching away on the floor faster than ever, "But what if I hadn't a sweetheart to think of, Miss O'Conner." It was a miserable attempt at prevarication, and he felt that it was.

"Why, then, I should say, as you're not blind, it's mighty lucky that you don't carry such a thing as a heart about you. I'd be ashamed if I were you, rising twenty years old, and neither crooked nor ugly; it's disgraceful to hear you say so—a pretty example to set to the boys!"

"True for you, and so it is," said Mark, "and more betoken, it's a much greater shame for me to tell any lies about the matter I *have* a sweetheart, though she doesn't

know it; ay, and have had one for this nigh hand a twelve-month."

"Only to think," replied Bridget, casting down her eyes, and affecting to conceal some sudden emotion, "and for a twelve-month nigh hand! Oh, dear! I don't feel well!"

Mark was puzzled, in point of fact, embarrassed. There was something in Bridget's manner which he couldn't understand; he had a vague presentiment that there was a mistake somewhere, but when she, pretending to be overcome, flung herself into his arms, the truth burst upon him at once. He was in a precious dilemma; Bridget was in love with him, and he felt downright ashamed of himself for being so fascinating. What he was to do, or how to extricate himself, he couldn't tell, as she, casting a fascinating glance right at him, said, softly:

"Dear Mark, those good-looking eyes of yours told me of your love, long, long before your lazy tongue."

"Love," interrupted Mark, endeavoring to put in a demurrer.

"To be sure," said she, "I saw it, I knew it and well;" she continued, seeing he was about to speak. "When do you mean to talk to Aunty? You know my fifty pounds are in her hands." She was an heiress, was Bridget.

"Pounds! Aunty! yes, to be sure," replied Mark, perfectly bewildered, "but I thought Ned Riley was"—

"Peggy's sweetheart—well, we all know that," interrupted Bridget, inly enjoying the consternation that painted Mark's cheek a livid white. "And you to be so jealous of Riley," she went on, "not to dance with me last night; I

knew the reason, but the jealousy that springs from love is soon forgot, so I forgot yours."

"Peggy! *his* sweetheart! Riley's!"

"To be sure, don't you know they are going to be married?"

"No!" vacantly replied the sorely bewildered Mark.

"Oh, yes! and now I want to tell you a pet plan of mine, if you don't think me too bold, Mark, and that is, how nice and cozy it would be, if we could only all be married on the same day."

This was too much for Mark; he couldn't endure it any longer; he started up, pushed his hat very far on his head, saying, in what he intended to be a most severe tone:

"Miss O'Conner, I don't know what could have put such an idea into your head. Marry, indeed! I've enough to do to take care of myself. No, I'm sorry to wound *your* feelings, but I shall never marry!"

"Oh! yes, you will," said Bridget, placing her arm in his, which he disengaged, saying bitterly:

"Never! never!"

"Nonsense, I'll bet you will, and, if it was only to humor me, Mark, on the very same day that Peggy is!"

"Bridget, I didn't think I could hate a woman as I'm beginning to hate you."

"Better before marriage than after, Mr. Mark. Come, I'll bet you a new Sunday coat, against a calico gown, and that's long odds in your favor, that what I've said will come true."

"Nonsense!"

"Is it a bet?"

"Pooh! I'll bet my life, against"—

"What it's worth, Mr. Mark—just nothing at all."

"True for you, now, Bridget; true for you," and Mark suddenly quitted the house in such real sorrow that it touched for a moment even Bridget's heart; but only for a moment. Pshaw! thought she, let him fret; it will do him good, and make the joy greater when he comes to know the truth. A hunt would be nothing without hedges and ditches. Proceeding to the window, she uttered an exclamation of surprise.

"Ha! as I live, here comes Peg herself, She must meet Mark; what fun! He sees her and stops short; what a quandary he's in. She sees *him!* How the little fool blushes; now they meet. Mark doesn't take her hand. I wonder what he's saying. 'It's a fine day,' I suppose, or something equally interesting; he passes on, and Peg looks as scared as if she had seen a ghost."

A sudden thought at this moment seemed to strike Bridget; she clapped her hands together and laughed a little, sharp laugh, saying, "I'll do it, I will; I'll have a bit of fun with Peg, too," so she pretended to be very busy at her spinning-wheel as Peggy entered, and hanging up her, cloak and bonnet, sat down without saying a word.

"Ah! Peg," Bridget began, "is that you? Mark has just been here."

"Indeed?" replied Peggy, twisting up one pretty curl so tightly as to hurt her head.

"The blessed truth," continued the wicked little tormentor. "Did you meet him?"

A very desponding "yes," was the response

"Well," demanded Bridget, anxiously, "did he say anything—I mean, anything *particular*?"

"He only said the weather was pleasant, and then passed on, without ever even shaking hands with me," sadly replied Peggy.

"Mark needn't have done that; whatever happens, he ought to be civil to *you*," said Bridget, with a peculiar expression that made Peggy's heart flutter within her like a pigeon.

"Civil to me! what *do* you mean, Bridget?"

Bridget hummed an air, and, as if suddenly wishing to change the conversation, said, gaily:

"Oh! I forgot, we were to tell each other's dreams this morning. Peg, you begin, what did *you* dream about?"

"Nothing, Bridget, I didn't sleep."

"Then you couldn't have dreamed," sagely responded the other, "but I did."

"What?"

"I dreamed that I had a beautiful new gown given to me, and by whom do you think?"

"I don't know; Ned Riley, may-be."

"Ned Riley, indeed," replied Bridget with a sneer; "not a bit of it. By a finer man than ever stood in *his* shoes. Who but Mark Brady?"

Peg's heart sank within her.

"That wasn't all I dreamed," and she fixed her wild

eyes full on Peg, in a way that made hers fall instantly "I dreamed that I was married to him."

"To Mark?" whispered Peggy.

"*To Mark!*"

Peggy didn't utter another syllable; didn't even look up, but sat motionless and pale, very pale. Bridget couldn't understand her seeming apathy; a more acute observer would have but contrasted it with the intense emotion which she felt within—an emotion not a whit lessened as Bridget continued, with marked expression:

"I dreamed all that this blessed morning, and morning dreams, you know, *always come true.*"

"Peggy, still silent, seemed to be wholly occupied in demolishing, piece by piece, the remnant of a faded flower which she had taken from her bosom, lingering over its destruction as though a portion of her heart went with each fragment—when Bridget suddenly started up, exclaiming, "Here comes Mark, I declare."

A painful spasm shot through Peggy's frame, yet she did not stir from her seat; the only evidence that she heard Bridget's exclamation was that her lips grew as pallid as her cheek.

"But, law, what am I thinking about? I must go and tidy my hair."

And away flew Bridget up to her room, from whence she crept stealthily down, and snugly ensconced herself behind the door. Naughty girl! to listen to what transpired.

Mark, who, since his conversation with Bridget, had seri-

ously contemplated suicide, but was puzzled about the best mode of making away with himself, had come to the conclusion that to enter the army as a common soldier would be the least criminal, although certainly the most lingering process, and it was to lacerate his feelings by a parting interview with his dearly-loved Peg, before he consummated the act of enlistment, that he now came.

Arrived at the door, he hesitated a moment, then giving one big gulp, he lifted the latch and entered. There he saw Peggy herself, looking straight into the fire, never once turning aside or raising her eyes, proof positive to Mark, if he wanted it, that she cared nothing for him. He sat down, and for several minutes there was a dead silence. Mark had fully intended to say something frightfully cutting to his sweetheart, but as he gazed upon her white, sad face, his resentment vanished, and he felt more inclined to implore than to condemn. He wanted to speak, but what to say he had not the remotest idea. At last Peg broke the silence, by murmuring softly, as though it were but a thought, to which she had given involuntary expression—

"May you be happy, Mark! May you be happy!"

"Happy!" echoed Mark, with a sharp emphasis, that thrilled painfully through Peggy, "Faith, it's well for *you* to be wishing me happiness."

"Indeed, indeed I do, Mark—I mean Mr. Brady," meekly replied the poor girl.

"Oh, that's right!" said Mark, bitterly. "Mr. Brady! It used to be Mark."

"But never can again."

"You're right! never!"

"Never!" and poor Peggy sighed deeply.

After another embarrassing pause, broken only by a sort of smothered sound, which *might* have been the wind, but wasn't, Mark started up, exclaiming:

"I see my company is displeasing to you, but I shan't trouble you long. That will be done to-morrow which will separate us for ever."

"To-morrow! so soon!" replied Peggy, with a stifled sob.

"Yes! the sooner the better. What is it *now* to you?"

"Oh, nothing, nothing! But I thought—that is—I'm very, very foolish."

Poor Peggy's heart overflowed its bounds; burying her face in her hands, she burst into tears.

Mark didn't know what to make of it. She must have liked me a little, thought he, or why this grief? Well, it's all my own fault. Why didn't I tell her of my love, like a man? and not sneak about, afraid of the sound of my own voice. I've lost her, lost the only thing that made life to me worth enduring, and the sooner I relieve her of my presence the better."

"Miss May! Peggy!" he said, with an effort at calmness, "this is the last time we may meet on earth; won't you give me your hand at parting?"

Peggy stretched out both hands, exclaiming through her tears—"Mark! Mark! this is, indeed, cruel!"

"It is, I know it is!" said Mark, brushing away an obtrusive tear. "So, God bless you, and good angels watch over you; and if you ever cared for me"—

"If I ever cared for you! oh, Mark!"

"Why! did you?" inquired Mark.

"You were my only thought, my life, my happiness!" There was the same curious sound from the chamber door, but the innocent wind had again to bear the blame. Peggy continued—"Mark, would that you had the same feeling for me!"

"I had! I had!" frantically he replied. "And more, oh! much more than I have words to speak. Why didn't we know this sooner?"

"Ah! why, indeed?" sadly replied Peggy, "but it is too late."

"*Too late!*" replied Mark, "*too late!*"

"Not a bit of it!" exclaimed Bridget, bursting into the room, streaming with tears of suppressed laughter, "Don't look so frightened, good people; I'm not a ghost. Who lost a new cap? eh, Peg. And more, betoken, who is likely to lose a new gown? I'll have my bets, if I die for it. So, you've spoke out at last, have you? You're a pretty pair of lovers. You'd have gone on everlastingly, sighing and fretting yourselves, until there wouldn't have been enough between you to make a decent fiddlestring, if I hadn't interfered."

"You?" cried Peggy and Mark, simultaneously.

"Yes, indeed, it made me perfectly crazy to see the two of you groaning and fussing, without the courage to say what your hearts dictated. There, go and kiss each other, you pair of noodles."

It is hardly necessary to say that Bridget's explanation

brought about a pleasant understanding between all parties, and it will be only needful to add that a few weeks afterwards there was a *double* wedding at the little parish chapel. One of the brides wore a bran new calico gown of such wonderful variety of color, and moreover a new cap of so elaborate a style of decoration, that she was the admiration and, of necessity, the envy of the entire female population.

Bridget had won both her wagers, thereby establishing, just as infallibly as all such matters *can* be established, the truth of the old saying:

The dream of the morning is sure to come true.

THE FORTUNE-TELLER.

"Show his eyes, and grieve his heart,
Come like shadows so depart." SHAKSPEARE.

THE insatiable desire to penetrate the dark veil of futurity, which pervades all classes, from the highest to the lowest, renders the occupation of the *Fortune-Teller* one of considerable profit. In no part of the world are there so many professors of the *art*, as in Ireland. The most insignificant village has its cunning person, of one sex or the other, whose province generally is to cure bewitched cattle, be well acquainted with all the scandalous gossip of the vicinity, and give advice and assistance in all delicate and difficult affairs of the heart; added to which, in some instances, a "*trifle of smugglin'*," and in all, the vending of interdicted drink: *Potieen*, that had never seen the ill-looking face of a gauger; a kind of liquid fire you might weaken with aquafortis, that would scrape the throat of an unaccustomed drinker as if he had swallowed a coarse file, but which our seasoned tipplers "*toss off*," glass after glass, without a grin, their indurated palates receiving it like so much water.

The class of individuals who take up, or are instructed

in the mysteries of Fortune-telling, combine rather antagonistic elements. They are generally the shrewdest, cunningest, cleverest, laziest people you can find. Studying, and understanding to a charm, the most assailable points of human nature, they obtain from their applicants, by circuitous questioning, the precise nature of their expectations; then dexterously "*crossing the scent*," with an entirely different subject, astonish them at last by expounding their very thoughts. Nor are the old-established mysteries, the appliances and incantations omitted, although they necessarily must be of a simple and curious nature; the great oracle, the cards, is brought into requisition on all occasions, varied by a mystic examination of tea-grounds, melted lead, and indeed, sometimes in imitation of the ancient soothsayer, *facilis descensus*, by the sacrifice of some poor old cat.

Bridget Fallow, or *Biddy na Dhioul*, as she was most commonly designated, was an extraordinary specimen of the genus. Many a heart-breaking was averted through her agency, and numberless the strange doings ascribed to her powers of witchcraft. The love-stricken "*from all parts of the country round*," a comprehensive Irish phrase, signifying a circuit of some twelve or fourteen miles, consulted ould Biddy, daily. Immense was her mystic reputation, and very many the "*fippenny bits*," the smallest piece of coin that could be obtained to "*cross her hand*," did she sweep into her greasy pocket, from the credulous of either sex.

It would be difficult to describe accurately the temple

of this particular dispenser of fortune. Bent nearly double, partly from age, and partly to give greater effect to her divinations (for the older a witch appears, the more credit is given to her skill), she sat, or rather crouched in a small, dimly-lighted room, surrounded by some dozen cats, of all ages and complexions, from playful kittendom to grave and reverend cat-hood; black, white, pie-ball'd, skew-ball'd, foxy, tortoise-shell, and tab. Now, those companions of Biddy's were held in especial horror by her visitors, who firmly believed them to be familiar demons, attendant on her will. But never were animals so libelled, for they were in truth, as frolicsome and mundane specimens of the féline, as ever ran after a ball of worsted. Biddy was fond of her cats, and though naturalists doubt the sincerity of cat-love, they certainly appeared to be greatly attached to her; night and day did those three generations of puss gambol about her; perhaps, indicating their preference for still life, they looked upon Biddy, as, in rigid mobility, she sat motionless and silent, inly enjoying their pranks, as merely a portion of the furniture, and so had as much right to jump on her shoulder, and hunt each other's tail, over and about her as upon anything else in the room. Certain it is they did not respect her a whit more than an old table, and Biddy, delighted with such familiarity, put no restraint on their impertinence. A dingy curtain, reaching half-way across the room, concealed a large, rudely-finished mirror-frame, which Biddy found extremely useful on several occasions. There were none of the awe-compelling accessories of the magic art, no alligator

stuffed, no hissing cauldron, no expensive globes; nothing, save an old black-letter folio, Biddy's universal book of reference, and a terribly dirty pack of cards, the marks nearly effaced from constant use, being the second, which, in a long life of fortune-telling, she had ever consulted. Adapting her mode of operations to the wish of her applicant, Biddy had various ways of penetrating the clouds of futurity, enumerating them to the curious visitor as follows: "Wirra, thin, it's welcome that yez are to ould Biddy na Dhioul; may you niver know sickness, sorrow, poverty, or disthress. It's myself that can tell yer fortune, whativer it is. I can tell it be the stars, or the cards, be the tay-grounds, coffee-grounds, meltid lead, or baccy-ashes; be signs, an' moles, an' dhrames; be the witch's glass, or be yer own good-lookin' hand."

The great secret of Biddy's success was, that all her auguries presaged *some* amount of good, and it was observed that the larger the piece of silver with which her hand was crossed, the more extensive was the fortune predicted. A "*fippenny-bit*," might produce a "*smart boy for a husband*," but "*half a crown*" would insure a "*jaunting car*," or, hint obliquely at "*the young masther*," give mysterious foreshadowings of "*silken gounds*," and an "*iligant family of childher*." A cute old soul was Biddy, and extensive the knowledge experience had given her of the pregnable points of general character. Why should we not give her a call?

I'll just tell you a few secrets, known only to two or three individuals besides myself, and as some of them will

be very likely to need Biddy's assistance, we shall unceremoniously accompany them on their visit.

It is Sunday; mass is just over; the sober gravity of the morning (for no people are more earnest in the performance of their religious duties during the time so allotted, than are the Irish peasantry), is beginning to change to a general aspect of enjoyment. The girls in their neat, clean dresses, are tripping along homeward; and many a bonnet and shawl, or calico dress, is descanted upon, praised or censured according to the opinion of the speaker, for the universal duty of the feminine chapel or church-goer, is to criticise at intervals the dresses of her neighbors.

"Athin, Mary," says one, "*did* you ever see such a pattern of a gound as *Miss* Machree had on her back this blessed day; if it hadn't as many colors in it as would make nigh hand half a dozen rainbows, I hope I may turn into a *nagur*. I declare to my goodness, I wouldn't give my ould washed-out gound for two of the likes of it."

Wouldn't she?

"True for you, Nell," replies another, "an' did you remark *purty* Norah, as the boys call her? Purty, indeed! it wouldn't take blind Barty, the piper, a month of Sundays to see all the purty there is about her. *I* wouldn't be seen with such a nose on *my* face; an' she comin' over us wid the pride of a sthraw bonnet, this beautiful summer's day; the hood of an ould grey cloak was good enough for the mother before her, to wear. It isn't disgracin' my mother's memory I'd be, by puttin' sthraw bonnets on my head."

"Well, it is a shame; do you know what I've heerd?"

"What?"

"Why, neither more nor less than that *purty* Miss Norah is setting her sthraw bonnet at Pat Kinchela."

"No!"

"It's the heaven's truth; didn't I see her to day, lookin' at him dhreadful? *I* wouldn't look at a man the way she did, no, not if he was made of goold."

"Whist! Nelly; look yondher! if there isn't Pat, see and that consated minx walkin' *arm-in-arm;* bless your sowl, there's quality manners for ye. I wonder, for my part, the road doesn't open and swally such impidence right up; now just obsarve them, sthruttin' along as if everybody else was the dirt undher their feet. Well, if that isn't owdaciousness, I wish somebody would tell me what is."

But, inasmuch as our story has more to do with Pat and Norah than with those chattering specimens of a rather numerous class, we'll attend to *them*, and let the others go about their business—of detraction.

Pat has just hazarded an important question, as would appear from the sudden and more brilliant flush that spread over pretty Norah's cheek, than from any significancy in her reply, which was simply:

"You're mighty impident to-day, Mr. Kinchela."

"Athin, Norieen, jewel," answered Pat, "if it comes to the rights of the thing, how the divil can I help it? Sure an' haven't you kept me danglin' afther you for nigh hand a twel'month, an' it's neither yis nor no, that I can squeeze out of your purty little mouth."

"Ah, indeed!" said Norah, with the shadow of a pout that might have been simulated, "then I suppose you'd be satisfied whichever it was."

"Faix, yis would be satisfactory enough," replied Pat, who did his wooing in rather a careless manner, philosophically.

"And if it happened to be no?"

"Why, thin, I suppose I'd have to put up wid that for the want of a betther."

"An' try your luck somewhere else, may-be?" continued Norah, with a dash of lemon.

"An' why not?" answered Pat, with apparent carelessness. "If you couldn't ketch a throut in one place, you wouldn't come back wid an empty basket, would you? unless, may-be, you had no particular appetite for fish."

"Then, sir, you have my permission to bait your hook as soon as you like, for I have no idea of nibblin'," said Norah, letting go Pat's arm, and walking *very* fast—not so fast, though, but that our cavalier friend could keep up with her, flinging in occasional morsels of aggravation.

"Now, don't be foolish, Norah; you're only tellin' on yourself. The boys will see that we've had a tiff, and the girls will be sure to say you're *jealous*."

"Jealous, indeed! I must *love* you first, Mr. Impidence."

"So you do."

"I ain't such a fool, *sir*."

"Yes, you are, *ma'am*; an' what's more nor that, you can't help it, *ma'am*."

"Can't I?"

"Not a bit of it. You've caught the sickness, an' it's the goolden ring that'll cure you, an' nothin' besides."

"It isn't you that'll be docthor, anyway."

"The divil a one else."

"High hangin' to all liars."

"I'd say that, too, only I wouldn't like to lose you, Norah, afther all. Come now, darlin'," he went on, varying his tactics, "don't let us quarrel on this blessed day; let us make it up *acush;* take a howld of my arm, this right arm, that would work itself up to the elbow to do you any sarvice, or smash into small pitatys the blaggard that offered you the ghost of an offince."

This blarney-flavored speech had some effect upon Norah, yet she concealed it like—a woman, sinking it down into her heart, and calling up a vast amount of anger to overwhelm it. Is it at all astonishing that the latter flew away in words, while the former nestled there for ever? Poor, foolish little Norah, her real feeling concealed by the cloud of temper she had raised, thought at that moment there was not a more unlovable being in existence than Pat, and what's more, she said so.

"Mr. Kinchela," said she, in her iciest manner, "I'm obleeged to you for your company, such as it is, but here is Cousin Pether, an' you needn't throuble yerself, or be wearin out shoe-leather any more comin' afther me."

"Norah!" said Pat, suddenly stricken into gravity, "are you in airnest?"

"I wish you the best of good mornin's, sir;" and taking Cousin Peter's arm, with a provoking smile on her lip, and

triumph in her eye, off went Norah, leaving Pat gazing after her, looking rather the reverse of wise—once only did she turn as she passed the corner of the street, but that simple circumstance rekindled hope within Pat's soul.

As he was thus standing, utterly unconscious of the observation he attracted, he was suddenly accosted by his best friend, Jim Dermot.

"Why, tear an' nounthers," said Jim, "is it ketchin' flies, or fairy-sthruck, or dead all out you are, Pat, avic? why, you look the picther of misfortune, hung in a black frame."

"Hollo, Jim, is that you?" cried Pat, waking out of his reverie, "wasn't that too bad intirely?"

"So it was—what was it?" replied Jim.

"Why, to lave me stuck here like a post, and to go off wid that *omadhaun* Pether."

"Well, it was quare, sure enough," replied Jim, without the slightest idea what Pat was driving at, yet hoping to arrive at it better from an apparent knowledge than by downright questioning. "To run off," he continued, "an' wid Pether, of all fellows in the world;" adding to himself, "I wondher who the divil Pether is, and where he's run to?"

"I didn't think she could sarve me so," said Pat.

"Oh! it's a she that's in it, is it?" thought Jim, saying, with a sage shake of the head, "I nivir would have b'lieved it of her myself; but wimin *is* conthrary divils, an' that's the truth. When did she go, Pat?"

"Why, now, this very minute."

"You don't say? well, an' what do you mane to do?"

"Do? why, nothing; what would you do?"

"Well, I believe I'd do *that same*, Pat, an' nothin' else."

"It isn't very likely that I'll let her know how much her conduct has hurt me."

"It might make her conaated."

"She's a shameless jilt."

"That she is, as sure as her name is —— what it is," said Jim, hoping Pat would fill up the pause.

"What would you advise me to do, Jim?" inquired Pat.

"Well, I don't know," replied the other, "it's a mighty delicate point to give a man advice upon; but if you'd be ruled by me you'd go an' ax ould Biddy na Dhioul."

"By gorra, but you're right there," said Pat, "I wondher I didn't think of that afore."

"It isn't too late."

"True for you; an' it's there I'll go this blessed minute. I'd rather know my fate at onst, than be kep' like a mouse in a thrap, wondhering whether the cat'll play wid me, or ate me in the mornin'."

"So, it is thrapped you are, Pat, is it? arrah, how did you manage that?"

"Faix, an' I walked into it wid my eyes open, like any other omadhoun of a mouse."

"Bedad, it takes a sinsible mouse to walk away from the smell of cheese, anyway, Pat."

"That's a fact, Jim, but I must be off to ould Biddy's: I'll get my mind *aised* one way or the other, wid a blessin' afore I sleep."

"Good luck attend you," said Jim, sorely mortified that with all his cunning, he couldn't get at the rights of the matter.

Pat made the best of his way to Biddy's cabin, truly in a miserable state of mind: this, the first obstacle to his love, had so increased its strength and intensity. After he had knocked once or twice the door opened, and he found Biddy in her usual position, surrounded by her usual playmates.

"God save you, Biddy," said he, taking a seat, and brushing the perspiration from his brow, "you're a knowledgeable woman, an' can tell me what I want to know."

"In coorse, I can, Mr. Pat Kinchela, whativer it is; not that I pretind to tell anything but what the iligant stars prognostify," replied Biddy, gravely referring to her miraculous volume, not that she had the slightest occasion to employ her shrewd plan of pumping this time; she knew all about it.

"The saints be good to us, Pat, darlin'," she suddenly exclaimed, "but here's a bitther disappointment for some one."

"Not for me, Biddy; don't say for me," cried Pat, "here, take this, an' this, pouring out all the copper, very thinly intersected with silver, which he had about him, into her apron; now, give us a good fortune if you can; long life to you."

"I didn't say it was for you, did I? just howld your whist, an' let the stars work without bein' hindhered, for they're mighty fractious now and thin," said Biddy, mum-

bling some unintelligible expressions and slily counting the while the extent of Pat's donation. The result was satisfactory.

"Pat, jewel," she said, "howld up your head, for there's money bid for you—you'll be a thremendious rich man yet."

"Oh! I don't care for that," he interrupted, "tell me of"—

"Norah Malone," quietly interrupted Biddy.

Pat was wonder-stricken, he gasped for breath.

"It's thrue, then, that you do know everything, Biddy."

"A'most everything," replied the old crone.

"Then, it's no use in my telling you," continued Pat, "how every life-dhrop of my heart was devoted to that same girl, how every wakin' thought, an' every sleepin' dhrame was filled up with her; now I've lost her, and the sunshine of my life is gone with her for ever."

"I know it all."

"But what—what am I to do? tell me, or I shall go mad."

"Thry your luck somewhere else."

"Pshaw! I might as well thry to stop the tide with a pitchfork."

"You do really love her, then?"

"Love her! Why do you ask? Do you doubt it?"

"I do."

"That shows how much you know, and now I doubt your power to tell any one's thoughts, since you can't tell mine."

"Oh, yes, but I can, if you want me to prove it. I'll tell you who you're thinking of at this moment."

"Do, and I'll believe anything."

"*Cousin Pether!*"

Pat fairly started from his seat; large drops suddenly gathered on his brow; he was frightened.

Biddy, seeing her advantage, went on: "You're a purty fellow, to call my power in question. I've a great mind to make you feel it in airnest. Will I go on or not?"

"Go on; anything," said Pat; "I'll say no more."

Biddy then shuffled the dirty pack of cards, cut and set them out in her lap, saying, as she proceeded: "Bad—nothing but bad luck. There, that queen of clubs is your sweetheart, and that knave of hearts must be Cousin Pether; he's rather carroty-headed."

Pat groaned.

"Here's a wedding," Biddy went on, "and lots of money, to who? Let me see: if it isn't to that knave of hearts again."

"Curse the knave of hearts," cried Pat, starting up, "I have had enough of this. I do believe you've been playin' wid me all this time. Good-bye"—

"Stay one minute; you think I've been playing with you, eh?" said the old witch, rising, and speaking in a mysteriously solemn tone of voice, "Young man, have you strength of mind enough to look upon the magic glass, and have your *eyes* convinced?"

"What mean you?" exclaimed Pat.

"To show you what you least wish to see—Norah and her cousin in each other's arms."

"Impossible; you're juggling with me now; you cannot show me that."

"*Look!*" screamed old Biddy, tearing back the dingy curtain—and there, sure enough, within the frame of the mirror, locked in each other's embrace, were *Norah* and *Peter*.

The suddenness of the disclosure, combined with the terror of the moment, acting upon a frame rendered weak from apprehension, made the blood rush into the brain of the unfortunate lover, and without uttering a sound, he fell heavily to the floor in a faint.

It was some time before he was restored to consciousness, when the first form that fell upon his sight was that of the detested Peter. He shut his eyes in the misery of unavailing rage, but opened them again in astonishment, as a well-known voice whispered in his ear:

"Dear Pat, it's your own Norah that's beside you."

Pat's delight was perfectly indescribable, and I shrink from the responsibility of attempting it; suffice it to say, for the elucidation of our mystery, that Norah and Peter were beforehand with him at old Biddy's, when, seeing him approach, they hid themselves behind the curtain. Norah had such a convincing proof of Pat's truthful love, that she never quarrelled with him again—at least before they were married: of their further proceedings I frankly confess my ignorance.

THE FAIRY CIRCLE.

"Don't be contthrairy
With an Irish fairy,
Or, I declare, he
Won't regard you much;
But be complaisant,
When that he's adjacent,
And he'll use you dacent,
If you merit such."

"CORNEY; avic?"

"Ma'm to you."

"What the mischief are you thinking so *thremendious* hard about?"

"Me thoughts is me own, anyway, Missis O'Carrol."

"Unless, may-be, you borrowed them from some one else; an' that's most likely, Mr. O'Carrol; for the niver an original idaya did I obsarve iminatin' from your own sinsabilities, sence here I've been."

"Exceptin' once."

"An' whin was that, may I ax?"

"Whin I tuk it into me foolish head to marry you."

"An' have you the owdashious vanity to suppose that nobody thought that before you?"

"Not to me knowledge, Mrs. O'C."

"The saints be good to us! There's a *dale* of ignorance

in the world; but come now, tell me, what is it that makes you lave off your work, evry now an' thin, lookin', for all the world, as cute as a concaited *gandher*."

"Why, thin, Moll *machree*, I'll tell you; but you must promise not to make fun o' me, for it's *your* good that's iver foremost in me heart."

"The blessin's on your lovin' sowl! I know it is."

"Well, then, Moll, come an' sit near me, an' lave off polishin' up that owld copper kittle; for I want to spake mighty sarious to you. Haven't you noticed that big, slated house that's just builded up, fornenst our very nose?"

"Of coorse I have."

"Yes, but do you know who's livin' in it? Who, but young Phil Blake, that was as poor as a *thranieen*, an' as ragged as a mountain goat, in his ivry-day clothes, not more nor six months ago?"

"You don't say!"

"It's the mortial truth; didn't I see him awhile ago, struttin' up an' down the place, as proud as any other pay-cock, wid a *blew* coat on his back, covered over wid brass buttons, a'most as big as fryin' pans, enough to dazzle the eyes out of a Christian's head; an' he ordherin' the min about, as importint as you plaze. Phil Blake, of all fellows in the *worrild*, that niver had the ghost of a fip-penny-bit to bless himself wid, to see him now, crammin' his fists into his breeches pockets, an jinkin' the goold an' the silver about, in the most aggravatin' way."

"But where did he get it all?"

"That's the chat—where? Guess, won't you?"

"I don't know, may-be some rich ould lady fell in love wid him."

"Is it wid Phil? Small chance of that, I'm thinkin'. Guess agin."

"May-be he had a lawshuit!"

"Be my *sowkins*, you're further in the mud than iver, Moll-dhee. Lawshuits isn't the stuff goold mines is made of; if so, it's only the lawyers that's licensed to dig. I'll tell you. Last night, meself an' a few boys was takin' a jug of punch, at the "Cross Kays," whin one of them up and towld us all about it. Moll, as thrue as you're here, it was neither more nor less than a *fairy-gift*."

"No!"

"Gospel! He cotch one of the little schamers (saving their prisince, for I suppose there's a lot of thim listenin', if we knew where they were perched), an' so, he wouldn't let him go until he gave him hapes of money. Why, they say Phil's as rich as an archbishop!"

"But, Corney, darlin', don't you know that fairy money niver thrives? let us wish Blake good luck, and think no more about it."

"Pooh! Nonsense! He has luck enough; we had better wish ourselves a slice. Money's money, Moll; a fairy groat would pay for a pot of porther just as aisily as Father Fogarty's. It isn't that I'm over covetious, but I can't help envyin' Phil."

"An' you see what harm even the first beginnin' of such a feelin' does. All this blessed day, you've hardly done a

stitch of work; instead of makin' the lapstone echo with the sound of your merry voice, you've been lookin' as disthracted as a sthray pig; why, you haven't even kissed the babby sence dinner. Go to work, Corney, while I get a cup of tay ready. Thank God, we've never wanted for a male's vittles yet, and have always a plinty in the house, agin we do."

"Yes, I know that; but haven't I to work for it, day afther day! No rest; nothing but slave, slave, slave, from year's end to year's end, while gintlefolks, like Phil, bad 'cess to him, can sthroll up an' down the sunny-side of the street, smoke as many pipes of tibbacky as they plaze; have roast beef ev'ry Sunday, an' wear top-boots. Murdher alive! It's a great thing to be one of the *quality*."

"Well, the mischief has got into you, I b'lieve. Corney, you niver tuk such a fit as this, afore."

"Niver mind, Moll, I know what I know; luck's like a fox; you have to hunt it hard before you ketch it; the divil a toe will it come to you. There's plinty of fairies about, an' who knows but there may be as lucky chaps as Phil Blake in the *worrild*."

At the conclusion of the above conversation, Corney silently resumed his work, endeavoring to add another piece to a wonderfully patched brogue, while Mary busied herself at the little bright turf-fire, boiling the water for *tea*—a few scanty grains of some apochryphal herb, representing that indispensable delicacy. She holds a rasher of exceedingly fat bacon on the end of a fork, which screws and twists itself about like some living thing enduring

fierce agony, while a sleepy-looking puss, with her tail twisted comfortably around her paws like a muff, sits intently watching the operation, evidently wondering in her own mind what it can possibly be that spits so cat-like and so spitefully into the fire. The walls of the little room are comfortably whitewashed; only one broken pane of glass in the window, and that neatly mended with a piece of old newspaper; the dresser is as white as soap and sand applied by tidy hands can make it, while the few household utensils that adorn it, shine to the utmost extent of their capability. It's hardly necessary to say, that a good, cleanly, homely and sensible wife, was Mary O'Carrol; and our friend Corney was an ungrateful rascal to be dissatisfied with his condition. The mistake he made was this (and it is by no means confined to Corney), he contrasted his situation in life with the *few* who were better off than himself, instead of the *many* who were infinitely worse.

And now, dear, domestic, tidy Mary spreads her little cloth, coarse 'tis true, but scrupulously clean and ironed, every fold showing like a printed line; she opens a little cupboard and produces an enormous home-baked loaf, so close and dense that a dyspeptic individual would feel an oppression by merely looking at it, but which our toil-hungered friends can dispose of by the pound, without the assistance of tonics; then, the small, black teapot, having *stood* the conventional time, is carefully wiped, and placed on the table, and the whole frugal but comfortable meal arrayed with that appetizing neatness without which it becomes a mere matter of feeding and not of enjoyment.

"Now, Corney, dear," said Mary, "tay's ready."

"Faix, an' there's a pair of us," replied Corney, "I'm just about as hungry as a dragin."

And no gourmet, even after he had lashed his appetite with stimulants, which would otherwise have sneaked away from the laborious work it had to undergo, ever sat down with so keen a palate, or rose from table with so capital a sense of satisfaction as did Corney on this particular occasion.

"Well, Molly machree," he cried, "I don't know that I iver had a greater thrate nor that same rasher; if the fat of it wasn't, for all the *worrild*, like double-distilled *marra*, may I niver use another tooth; an' that *tay! Gogs bleakey*, Moll, if you haven't a recait for squeezin' the parliaminthary flaviour out of the *herrib!* regard the color of it!"

"An' afther three wathers," replied Mary, with pardonable vanity.

"Thrue for you, darlin'; why, the bread seems lighter, an' the butther sweeter, an' the crame thicker. I'll be judged by the cat—look at the baste; if she hasn't been thryin' to lick the last dhrop off of her *hushkers*, for as good as a quarther of an hour, an' it's stickin' there still, as tight as a carbuncle to a Christian's nose; an' may-be I ain't goin' to enjoy this," he continued, as drawing his chair close to the fire, out came his use-blackened pipe. He took just as much time in preparation, cutting his tobacco and rolling it about in his hand, as Mary did to clear away the tea-things, in order that nothing should

nterfere with that great source of comfort—his smoke. Having placed a small piece of lighted turf on top of his pipe he threw himself back in his chair. With eyes half closed, and an expression of the most profound gratification creeping over his features, he sent forth several voluminous whiffs—what he called "saysonin' his mouth;" but very soon, as though the sensation was too delicious to be hurried over, he subsided into a slow, dignified, and lazy smoke, saying, between puffs:

"Blessin's on the fellow that first invented 'baccy; it's mate an' dhrink to the poor man; I'd be on me oath, if I wouldn't rather lose me dinner nor me pipe, any day in the week."

"Where did 'baccy come from, Corney?" inquired Mary.

"Why, from 'Meriky; where else?" he replied, "that sint us the first pitaty. Long life to it, for both, say I!"

"What sort of a place is that, I wonder?"

"'Meriky, is it? They tell me it's mighty sizable, Moll, darlin'. I'm towld that you might rowl England through it, an' it would hardly make a dent in the ground; there's fresh water oceans inside of it that you might dround Ireland in, and save Father Matthew a wonderful sight of throuble; an' as for Scotchland, you might stick it in a corner of one of their forests, an' you'd niver be able to find it out, except, may-be, it might be by the smell of the whisky. If I had only a thrifle of money, I'd go an' seek me fortune there."

"Arrah, thin, what for Corney?"

"Oh! I don't know; I'm not aisy in me mind. If we were only as rich now as Phil Blake, how happy we might be!"

There was the cloud that shut out content from Corney's heart—far-sighted envy, that looks with longing eyes on distant objects, regardless of the comfort near. Most stupid *envy*, which relinquishes the good within its grasp to reach at something better unattainable, and only becomes conscious of its folly when time has swept away the substance and the shadow.

"It was the fairies that gave it to him," resumed Corney, as though communing with himself, while poor Mary, with a fond wife's prescience, mourned, as she foresaw that the indulgence of this new feeling would, most probably, change her hitherto industrious mate into an idle visionary.

"*The Fairies!*—An' why the divil shouldn't they give one man a taste of good luck, as well as another? I'll do it—I will—this very blessed night—*I'll do* it!"

"Do what?" interrupted Mary, in alarm.

"Oh, nothing, nothing!—an' yet, I've niver kept anything from you, Molly, an' I don't know why I should now! Sure, it's you that'll have the binifit of it, if it comes to good."

"Dear Corney," replied Mary, "I'm happy enough as it is, so long as Heaven gives us strength to provide for each other's wants, an' you continue to be, what you always have been, a good husband to me. I'd rather not be troubled with any more."

"It's nothin' but right for you to say so, Mary, darlin',"

returned Corney; "but now, supposin' that I could make a lady of you—eh? Think of bein' able to wear a fine silken gound, an' a beautiful sthraw bonnet, wid a real feather stuck in it; wouldn't you jerk your showlders to show off the silk, an' toss your purty head for to humor the feather?"

I must confess Mary's heart did flutter a little, at the mention of the silk gown and the feather. Corney saw his advantage, and continued,

"You know how it was Phil got his money; it was by sleepin in a *fairy circle*. I know where there's one, an' wid a blessin', I'll thry it meself."

"You won't be so foolish, Corney?"

"May I niver taste glory, if I don't do it!"

Of course, after that solemn, though doubtful obligation, Mary dared not endeavor to dissuade him from following out his intention, notwithstanding the most melancholy forebodings of kidnapping, fairy-blighting, and all the terrors associated with supernatural agency, filled her imagination.

The evening was now far advanced, and Corney, having finished his pipe, rose to go.

"Come, Molly," he exclaimed, gaily, "kiss me before I start, an' wish me iligant luck."

Mary, with tearful eyes, replied, "Dear Corney, if you had all the luck I wish you, you wouldn't have to go out into the cowld to hunt for it."

"Well, God bless you, darlin', if I don't come back to you Cornalius O'Carrol, Esquire."

"You'll come home my own dear, contented husband."

"We'll see," said Corney, and away he went.

It was nothing but reasonable that he should pay a visit to the "Cross Kays" before he went on his fairy hunt, and it was nothing but natural upon his arrival there, to find his resolution had receded so far that it took sundry pots of beer to float it up again. At last, brimful of that unthinking recklessness, which the intoxicated generally mistake for courage, off he started on his expedition, singing remarkably loud, in order to persuade any lurking feeling of cowardice that might be within him, that he wouldn't be influenced by it a morsel. As he neared the village church, however, his voice unconsciously subsided into utter silence; there was a short cut through the churchyard to the place of his destination, but he made a full stop at the little stile; many and many a time had he crossed it night and morning, without a thought, and now it seemed to call up ghostly images; the wind as it moaned through the trees, appeared to address itself particularly to him; it wasn't more than a stone's throw to the other side, and he wanted to clear it with a bound. At this moment the rusty old clock suddenly squeaked and boomed out upon the startled air. The first stroke, so sharp and unexpected, shattered Corney's nerves like a stroke of paralysis; recovering from his fright, he laughed at his folly, but the sound of his own voice terrified him still more. It was not familiar to him—he didn't know it! A fancy came into his head that somebody was laughing for him, and he fairly shivered!

A sudden thought relieved him: there was no occasion to go through the churchyard at all!

"What a fool I am," thought he, "it isn't so far round, and there's plenty of time. Divil take me if I wouldn't go home agin, only Mary would think me such a coward, besides, didn't Phil do it? That's enough; faint heart never won anything worth spakin' of—so here goes."

About half an hour's walk brought him to the meadow in which lay the object of his search—a fairy-circle. Now this same fairy-circle, is nothing more nor less than a ring of grass, which, from some cause or another, probably known to botanists, but certainly a mystery to most people, is of a different shade of color to that which surrounds it. Tradition celebrates such places as the favorite resort of fairies, by whom they were formed, that they might pursue their midnight revelry without fear of danger from inimical powers. The Irish peasantry carefully avoid trespassing on those sacred precincts, and indeed scarcely ever pass them without making a reverential bow.

Our ambitious friend, Corney, hesitated for some time, before he entered the magic enclosure, exceedingly doubtful as to the treatment he should receive; at last, swallowing his trepidation with a spasmodic gulp, he placed one foot within the circle, taking care to propitiate the invisibles on whose exclusive property he was so unceremoniously intruding.

"The blessin's on all here," said he, "an' I hope I'm not disturbin' any frolic or business that yez may be indulgin' in. It's mighty sleepy that I am, an' if yer honors would

give me lave to recline meself atop of the grass, an' make it convanient not to stick any rheumaticks into me for takin' such a liberty, I'd recaive it as a compliment. If it's a thing that I happen promiscuously to thread on anybody's toes, I have no manin' whativer in it. By your laves, I'm goin' to lie down, an' I'll drop aisy, in order that I mayn't hurt anything."

So saying, Corney let himself down very gingerly, and lay full length within the fairy circle; he was one of those weather-proof individuals to whom the meadow-grass was as good as a feather-bed. Consequently what with the walk and the beer, it wasn't many minutes before he was snoring fast.

He hadn't been asleep, as he thought, an instant, before he felt an innumerable quantity of tiny feet traversing him all over; with regular step they marched up his throat, and scaled his chin; making two divisions up his cheeks, they arrived at his eyes, where they commenced tugging at the lids until they were forced open; the sight that met his view filled him with dreadful wonder. The circle of meadow, in which he had barely room to stretch himself out, formed all he could see of earth. Church, village, country, all had vanished; he rubbed his eyes and looked again, but there was nothing; with an inexpressible sensation of awe, he turned round, and creeping cautiously to the edge of the circle, gazed downward, and could just discover the village he had quitted about a mile below; with still increasing dread, he was now aware that he was gradually mounting higher and higher. One more look, vil-

lages, cities, countries, were blended into an undistinguishable mass, and soon the globular form of the earth appeared, thoroughly defined, swinging in the air.

He then became sensible of a tremendous heat, which increased in intensity, until he found to his dismay that he was rapidly shrinking in size; his flesh dried up, shrivelled, cracked, and clasped his diminishing bones tighter, until at last he was not bigger than a respectable fly. "This is mighty quare," thought Corney, "there's a great lot of things like me frolicin' about. I feel as light as a feather. I wonder if I couldn't make one among them." So saying, he bounded up, and to his great amazement found that he had literally jumped out of his skin. He perched upon his own head, which had resumed its natural size and flying off, found himself floating securely in the air, while the carcass which he had just deserted fell, fairy-circle and all, rapidly towards the earth, and finally, also disappeared. Oh! the pranks that Corney played in the first delight of being able to fly; he dived down, he careered up, he threw mad summersets like a tumbler-pigeon —so light and buoyant had he become, that the passing vapors served him for a resting-place; he was happy, intoxicated with glee, thousands upon thousands of atomies gambolled around him like gnats in a sunbeam, the whole surrounding expanse was instinct with joyous life.

And they knew Corney, and saluted him as he passed by, with a compliment.

"Hallo!" said they, "here's Corney O'Carrol; how are you, Corney? It's well you're looking;" and Corney was

astonished at the extensive nature of his atmospheric acquaintance.

"How do you like a fairy's life, Corney?" said one slim, midge-waisted chap.

"Iligant, your fairyship, iligant," said Corney.

"Then, I'd advise you to make the most of it, while it lasts. You'll soon have to appear before our king; and if you don't give a satisfactory reason for seeking him, woe betide you."

"Don't be frightened, sir," said Corney; "I've rayzon enough for comin', to satisfy any dacint-disposed fairy."

"Doubtful," said the good-natured elf, and off he flew.

"Stupid sperrit," thought Corney, and over he tumbled in mad recklessness, enjoying actually, that delicious sensation which sometimes occurs to people in dreams—the ability to skim through the air with the speed and safety of a bird. What struck Corney most particularly was the universal expression of glee which prevailed; nothing could he hear but a universal hum, which rose and fell on the ear with a purr-like undulation, such as one might imagine would proceed from a paradise of remarkably happy cats.

While Corney was thus revelling in his new-found element, he was suddenly accosted by two very genteel fairies. "Mr. Cornelius O'Carrol, we presume?" said they.

"There's not a doubt of it, gintlemen," replied Corney.

"We have come to have the honor of conducting you into the presence of our king," they continued.

"With a heart and a half," said Corney; "where might his majesty domesticate?"

"In yonder goold-tinted cloud, a few seconds' fly from this; follow us."

Upon nearing the regal abode, Corney observed sundry small substances, like duck-shot, dropping downward. "What's thim?" inquired he of his conductors.

"Oh!" answered one, "only a few discontented souls, who, like you, have sought our king, and haven't given sufficient reason for troubling him with their complaints."

Corney began to feel nervous, but coming to the conclusion that he had as good a right to be enriched through fairy agency as ever Phil Blake had, he put on a bold front, and was ushered into the presence of the fairy potentate. There, a sight of such dazzling splendor presented itself to his view, that, as he said himself, "You might as well try to count the stars of a frosty night, or look right into the sun's heart of a summer's day, as to give the slightest notion of the grandeur that surrounded me." All he could compare it to, was, a multitude of *living jewels* of every variety of hue, sparkling and flashing in perpetual light.

As soon as he could collect his scattered senses, he heard a voice exclaim, "What, ho! soul of O'Carrol, approach!"

"So I'm thravelin' without my trunk this time, any way," thought Corney, as he advanced toward the voice.

It continued, "Soul of a mortal, why hast thou sought our presence?"

"May it plaze yer majesty," Corney began to stammer out, "bekase I was a trifle unaisy in me mind."

"What about?"

"In regard of the scarcity of money, plaze your reverence."

"What is your trade?"

"A shoemaker, sir."

"Cobbler, you mean," said the voice, severely. "No lying here; recollect your poor, miserable, naked soul stands before us."

Corney thought of the height he'd have to fall, and trembled.

"You can't get work, I suppose," the voice returned.

"Too much of it, if it plaze yer honor. I niver have a minute to spare."

"For what?"

"Why, yer honor, to——to——"

"Remember the punishment of prevarication. To what?"

"To take a drink."

"Then you have no home?"

"Oh, yes, but I have, sir."

"But 'tis pleasanter to lounge in a tap-room?"

"A trifle, may-be, your honor."

"Perhaps you have no wife to make your home comfortable?"

"Have't I though; the best that ever drew the breath of life," cried Corney, with a loving remembrance of Mary.

"Poor fellow," continued the voice; "your situation is

deplorable, it appears. You have a good trade, an excellent wife, a comfortable home, and yet you are discontented."

Corney felt himself resolving into a leaden pellet.

"One question more," said the voice; "when did you first feel dissatisfied?"

"Why, to tell the truth, yer honor, as soon as that fellow, Phil Blake, began to build his big brick house opposite to my little mud cabin. Before that, I was as gay as a lark, but it stood like a great cloud between me and the sun."

"Envy was the cloud, envy, that gloomiest of all earthly passions. Why do you covet this man's fortune?"

"Because, sir, he always looks so smilin', and jinks his money about, an' dispises the poor boys he used to be friendly with."

"Foolish, foolish soul!" said the voice, in accents of commiseration, "but not yet wholly tainted. Thy love of home hath partially redeemed thee. Listen to me. Dost thou see yonder piled up mass of rainbow-tinted clouds. Do they not look gloriously, as the rising sun flings his beams through them, as though revelling in their embrace? Wouldst thou not like to behold such magnificence closer?"

"Nothing in life betther, yer majesty," said Corney.

"Then away; a wish will place you in their midst—a thought return you here."

So with the wish and thought Corney went and came back.

"Well, what didst thou see?" inquired the Fairy King.

"The divil a haperth," replied Corney, "but a mighty black and most unwholesomely damp cloud."

"What should that teach you?"

"Never to thravel without an umbrella, yer honor, I suppose," answered Corney, who to say the truth, *was* a little obtuse.

"Fool," said the fairy, "since I cannot lesson thee, go to thy kindred earth, and learn experience from realities. Proceed to the chamber of the man whose good fortune thou enviest; then to thine own, and if thou art not satisfied with thy condition, seek me again, and meet with thy reward. Away!"

As if by magic, the brilliant assembly dispersed like clouds of gold-dust floating on the wind, and Corney was left alone.

"That's a mighty high sort o' chap," said Corney, "but I suppose I'd bether do what he towld me for fear'd he'd turn spiteful."

So Corney wished himself within the chamber of Blake, and there he saw the most piteous sight earth can produce: a young mother weeping tears of agony over the body of her first-born. A man stood beside her with features set and hard, as though turned to stone by hopeless grief.

"My God," thought Corney, "and these are the people whose lot I have envied, and my own blue-eyed darling, is *he* safe? Home, home," cried he, and with the wish was there. In his little cradle lay the beautiful boy

steeped in the angel-watched, the holy sleep of infant innocence, while Mary, on her knees, mingled her prayer for her absent husband. Corney was rushing towards her, but suddenly remembering himself: "What a fool I am," thought he, "I forgot I was a sperrit, at all events, I can kiss the babby." With that, he bounded into the cradle, and nestled on the boy's lip. Mary, seeing the child smile in his sleep, exclaimed: "Good angels are putting sweet thoughts into your head, my blessed babe," and she softly kissed him too.

"Oh! murdher," thought Corney, "this will never do; I must go and look afther my body and bring it home. Thanks to the good fairies, I've larned a lesson that shall last *my* life and my boy's, too, if I have any influence over him."

So saying, Corney wished himself in the meadow where his tangible proportions were extended, and having kicked and got in, shook himself carefully to see if he had obtained absolute possession.

"It's all right," said he, "I've come back." Looking up and around him, he was surprised to see the bright sunlight of morning, and still more so to observe Mary trudging through the churchyard to meet him.

"Oh, well," said Mary, anxiously, when they encountered, "what luck?"

"A power of knowledge, but no money," said Corney, sententiously.

"Did you see the fairies?"

"Did I *see* them! bedad, I was one myself."

"Oh! be aisy!"

"The divil a doubt of it; wasn't I at home a bit ago, unbeknownt to you? Answer me this, didn't you kiss the babby just before you came out?"

"As thrue as life, I did," said Mary, slightly awe-struck.

"I was there and saw you do it."

"Where were you, Corney?"

"Sittin' on the end of his nose."

Of course that was proof positive, but inasmuch as Mary always *did* kiss the boy before she left the house, the coincidence becomes less remarkable.

It only remains for me to say, that the circumstance made a very favorable change in Corney's disposition, or rather dissipated the cloud which obscured his real character. Mary found her account in it, by an increase of industry on his part, and he was rewarded by a corresponding anxiety in her, to make his home happy. Many and many a time would he give an account of his aerial journey, religiously convinced of its reality; once only Mary just ventured to insinuate that it might possibly have been a dream, but the *I-pity-your-ignorance-look* which Corney gave her, made her heartily ashamed of having hazarded so stupid an opinion, and, as a matter of course, she soon believed as implicitly as her husband, the wonderful adventure of *The Fairy Circle.*

O'BRYAN'S LUCK.

A TALE OF NEW YORK.

CHAPTER I.

THE MERCHANT-PRINCE.

In the private office of a first-class store sat two individuals, each thoroughly absorbed in his present employment, but with very different feelings for the work. One —it was the head of the establishment, the great Mr. Granite, the millionaire merchant—was simply amusing himself, as was his usual custom at least once a day, figuring up, by rough calculation, the probable amount of his worldly possessions, they having arrived at that point when the fructifying power of wealth made hourly addition to the grand total; while the other, his old and confidential clerk, Sterling, bent assiduously over a great ledger, mechanically adding up its long columns, which constant use had enabled him to do without the possibility of mistake. With a profound sigh of relief, he laid down his pen, and rubbing his cramped fingers, quietly remarked:

"Accounts made up, sir."

"Ah, very good, Sterling," replied the stately principal, with a smile, for his arithmetical amusement was very satisfactory, "how do we stand?"

"Balance in our favor, two hundred and fifty-seven thousand eight hundred and forty-seven dollars, and twenty-three cents," slowly responded the old clerk, reading from his abstract.

"You're certain that is correct, Mr. Sterling?" inquired the merchant-prince, in a clear, loud voice, which indicated that the old, time-worn machine was wearing out. He was so deaf that it was only by using his hand as a conductor of the sound, that he could hear sufficiently to carry on a conversation.

"Correct to a cypher, sir," he replied. "I have been up and down the columns a dozen times."

"Good."

"Did you speak, sir?"

"No."

"Ah! my poor old ears," the old clerk whispered, half aside. "Five and forty years in this quiet office has put them to sleep. They'll never wake up again, never, never."

"You have been a careful and useful assistant and friend, Sterling," said the merchant, in a kindly tone, touching him on the shoulder with unaccustomed familiarity, "and I thank you for the great good your services, have done the house."

"Bless you, sir, bless you—you are too good. I don't deserve it," replied Sterling, unable to restrain the tears

which this unusual display of good feeling, had forced up from the poor old man's heart.

"I shall have no further need of you to-day, Sterling, if you have any business of your own to transact."

"I have, I have, my good, kind friend, and thank you for granting me the opportunity," said Sterling, descending with difficulty from his place of torture.—Why will they not abolish those inflexible horrors, those relics of barbarism, those inquisitorial chattels—office-stools? "I'll go now, and mingle my happiness with the sweet breath of Heaven—and yet, if I dared to say what I want—I"—

"Well, speak out, old friend." The merchant went on, with an encouraging look: "If your salary be insufficient"—

"Oh! no, no!" interposed the other, suddenly, "I am profusely paid—too much, indeed—but"— and he cast down his eyes hesitatingly.

"This reserve with me is foolish, Sterling. What have you to say?"

"Nothing much, sir; indeed, I hardly know how to bring it out, knowing, as I well do, your strange antipathy"— Granite turned abruptly away. He now knew what was coming, and it was with a dark frown upon his brow he paced the office, as Sterling continued:

"I saw *him* to-day."

"Travers?"

"Yes," replied the other, "Travers. But don't speak his name as though it stung you. I was his father's clerk before I was yours."

"You know what I have already done for him," moodily rejoined the merchant.

"Yes, yes—I know it was kind, very kind of you—you helped him once; but he was unsuccessful. He is young—pray, pray, spare him some assistance. You won't miss it—indeed you won't," pleaded the clerk.

"Sterling, you are a fool," Granite replied, sternly. "Every dollar lent or lost is a backward step that must be crawled up to again by inches. But I am inclined to liberality to-day. What amount do you think will satisfy this spendthrift?"

"Well, since your kindness emboldens me to speak—it's no use patching up a worn coat, so even let him have a new one—give him another chance—a few hundred dollars, more or less, can't injure you, and may be his salvation. About five thousand dollars will suffice."

"Five thousand dollars! are you mad, Sterling?" cried the merchant, starting to his feet in a paroxysm of anger.

"Your son will have his half a million to begin with," quietly suggested Sterling.

"He will, he will!" cried the other, with a strange, proud light in his eye, for upon that son all his earthly hopes, and haply those beyond the earth, were centered. "Wealth is power, and he will have sufficient; he can lift his head amongst the best and proudest; he can wag his tongue amongst the highest in the land—eh, my old friend?"

"That can he, indeed, sir, and be ashamed of neither head nor tongue, for he's a noble youth," replied the clerk.

"Here, take this check, Sterling. I'll do as you wish this time; but mind it is the last. I have no right to injure, even in the remotest degree, my son's interests, of which I am simply the guardian. You can give it to—to —*him*, and with this positive assurance."

"Bless you—this is like you—this is noble, princely," murmured the old clerk, through his tears, which now were flowing unrestrainedly; "when I tell"—

"Hold! repeat his name again, and I recall the loan. I repent already of having been entrapped into this act of folly."

"You wrong your own liberal nature," said Sterling, mildly. "You are goodness itself, and fear not but you will receive your reward four-fold for all you have done for"—

"Away, you prating fool," cried Granite, in a tone that hurried the old clerk out of the office, full of gratitude for the service done, and of unaffected joy, that Providence had selected him to be the bearer of such happy intelligence to the son of his old employer.

Meantime, the merchant-prince flung himself into his comfortable easy-chair, a spasm of agony passing across his harsh features. "Oh! Travers, Travers!" he inly ejaculated, "must that black thought ever thrust itself like a grim shadow across the golden sun-ray of my prosperity?"

CHAPTER II.

THE MAN OF LABOR.

THE accommodating reader will now be kind enough to accompany me to a far different place from that in which the foregoing dialogue was held. With an effort of the will—rapid as a spiritual manifestation—we are there. You see, it is an exceedingly small habitation, built entirely of wood, and, excepting that beautiful geranium-plant on one window, and a fine, sleek, contented-looking puss winking lazily on the other—both, let me tell you, convincing evidence that the household deities are worshipped on the hearth within—for wheresoever you see flowers cultivated outside of an humble house, look for cleanliness, and domestic comfort on the inside—excepting those two things, but little of ornament is visible. Kind people dwell within, you may know; for, see, the placid puss don't condescend to change her position as we near her; her experience hasn't taught her to dread an enemy in our species.

"Lift the latch; 'tis but a primitive fastening—nay! don't hesitate; you know we are invisible. There! you are now in the principal apartment. See how neat and tidy everything is. The floor, to be sure, is uncarpeted but then it is sedulously clean. Look at those white wil

dow-curtains; at that well-patched table-cloth, with every fold as crisp as though it had been just pressed; the dresser over there, each article upon it bright as industry and the genius of happy home can make it.—What an appetizing odor steams in from yonder kitchen! and listen to those dear little birds, one in each window, carrying on a quiet, demure conversation, in their own sweet way! Do they not say, and does not every quiet nook echo:

"Though poor and lowly, there is all of Heaven that Heaven vouchsafes to man, beneath this humble roof; for it is the sphere of her who is God's choicest blessing—that world angel—a good, pure-hearted, loving WIFE.

But hark! who is that singing? You can hear him, although he is yet a street off; and so can she who is busy within there, you can tell by that little scream of joy.

That is Tom Bobalink, the honest truckman, and the owner of this little nest of contentment.

But, if you please, I will resume my narrative my own way, for you are a very uncommunicative companion, friend reader, and it is impossible for me to discover whether you like the scene we have been looking at, or do not.

In a few moments, Tom rushed into the little room, his face all a-glow with healthy exercise, and a joyous song at his lips.

"Hello! pet, where are you?" he cried, putting down his hat and whip.

"Here am I, Tom!" answered as cheerful a voice as ever bubbled up from a heart, full of innocence and love.

"*Dtn* in a *sec*," meaning dinner in a second; for "Tom and Pol," in their confidential chats, abbreviated long words occasionally; and I give this explanation as a sort of guide to their pet peculiarity.

"Hurry up, Polly!" cried Tom, with a good-humored laugh, "for I'm jolly hungry, I tell you. Good gracious! I've heard of people's taking all sorts of thing to get up an appetite; if they'd only have the sense to take *nothing*, and keep on at it, it's wonderful what an effect it would have on a lazy digestion."

Polly now entered with two or three smoking dishes, which it did not take long to place in order. Now, I should dearly like to give you a description of my heroine —aye! heroine—for it is in her station that such are to be found—noble spirits, who battle with privation and untoward fate—smoothing the rugged pathway of life, and infusing fresh energy into the world-exhausted heart. Oh! what a crown of glory do they deserve, who wear a smile of content upon their lips, while the iron hand of adversity is pressing on their hearts, concealing a life of martyrdom beneath the heroism of courageous love.

I say I should like to give you some slight description of Polly's external appearance, but that I choose rather that my readers should take their own individual ideas of perfect loveliness, and clothe her therein; for, inasmuch as she is the type of universal excellence, in mind and character, I wish her to be so in form and beauty.

"What have you got for me, Polly?" says Tom.

"It ain't much," she replied; "cos you know we can't

afford *lux'es;* but it's such a sweet little neck of *mut*, and lots of *wedges*."

"Gollopshus!" says Tom; "out with it! I'm as hungry as an unsuccessful office-seeker."

"Office-seekers! what are they, Tom?"

"Why, Polly, they are—faith, I don't know what to compare them to; you've heard of those downy birds, that when some other has got hisself a comfortable nest, never rests until he pops into it. But them's politics, Polly, and ain't *prop* for *wom* to meddle with."

"I agree with you there, Tom, dear; there's enough to occupy a woman's time and attention inside of her house, without bothering her heart with what's going on outside."

"Bless your homey little heart!" cried Tom, heartily. "Oh! Polly, darling, if there were a few more good wives, there would be a great many less bad husbands. This is glorious! If we could only be sure that we had as good a dinner as this all our lives, Pol, how happy I should be; but I often think, my girl, that if any accident should befall me, what would become of you."

"Now, don't talk that way, Thomas; nor don't repine at your condition; it might be much worse."

"I can't help it. I try not; but it's impossible, when I see people dressed up and tittevated out, as I go jogging along with my poor old horse and truck—I envy them in my heart, Pol—I know it's wrong; but it's there, and it would be worse to deny it."

"Could any of those fine folks enjoy their dinner better than you did, Tom?" said Polly, with a cheering smile.

"No, my girl!" shouted he, and the joy spread over his face again—"not if they had forty courses. But eating isn't all, Pol," he continued, growing suddenly serious once more. "This living from hand to mouth—earning with hard labor every crust we put into it—never seeing the blessed face of a dollar, that isn't wanted a hundred ways by our necessities—is rather hard."

"Ah! Tom, and thankful ought we to be that we have health to earn that dollar. Think of the thousands of poor souls that are worse off than ourselves! Never look above your own station with envy, Thomas; but below it with gratitude."

It was at this moment that there appeared at the open door, a poor, wretched-looking individual, evidently an Irishman, and, from the singularity of his dress, only just arrived. He said not a word, but upon his pale cheek was visibly printed a very volume of misery.

"Hello! friend, what the devil do you want?" asked Tom.

"Don't speak so, Thomas. He's sick and in distress," said Polly, laying her finger on his mouth. "There! suppose you were like that?"

"What? a Paddy!" replied the other, with a jolly laugh; "don't mention it!" then calling to the poor stranger, who was resignedly walking away; "Come on Irish!" he cried. "Do you want anything?"

"Av you plaze, sir," answered the Irishman, "I'd like to rest meself."

"Sit down, poor fellow!" said Polly, dusting a chair, and handing it towards him.

"I don't mane that, ma'm; a lean o' the wall, an' an air o' the fire 'll do. The blessin's on ye for lettin' me have it!", so saying, he placed himself near the cheerful fireplace, and warmed his chilled frame.

"A big lump of a fellow like you, wouldn't it be better for you to be at work than lounging about in idleness?" said Tom.

"Indeed, an' its thrue for ye, sir, it would so; but where is a poor boy to find it?"

"Oh! anywhere—everywhere."

"Bedad, sir, them's exactly the places I've been lookin' for it, for the last three weeks; but there was nobody at home. I hunted the work while I had the stringth to crawl afther it, an' now, av it was to come, I'm afear'd that I haven't the stringth to lay howld ov it."

"Are you hungry?" inquired Polly.

"I'm a triffe that way inclined, ma'm," he replied, with a semi-comic expression.

"Poor fellow, here, sit down and eat," said Polly, hurriedly diving into the savory stew, and forking up a fine chop, which she handed to the hungry stranger.

"I'd relish it betther standin', if you plaze, ma'm," said he, pulling out a jack-knife and attacking the viands with vigorous appetite, exclaiming, "May the Heavens bless you for this good act; sure it's the poor man that's the poor man's friend, afther all. You've saved me, sowl and body this blessed day. I haven't begged yet, but it was comin' on me strong. I looked into the eyes of the quality folks, but they carried their noses so high they couldn't see the

starvation that was in my face, and I wouldn't ax the poor people for fear they were worse off than meself."

"Ain't you sorry, Thomas, for what you said just now?" inquired Polly of her husband.

"No," he replied, striking his fist on the table. "I'm more discontented than ever, to think that a few hundred scoundrel schemers, or fortunate fools, should monopolize the rights of millions; isn't it devilish hard that I can't put my hand in my pocket and make this poor fellow's heart jump for joy."

"Point out to him where he can get some employment, Thomas, and his heart will be continually jumping," replied Polly.

By this time the poor stranger had finished his extempore meal, and shut up his pocket-knife, which he first carefully wiped on the tail of his coat. "May God bless you for this," said he. "I'm stronger now. "I'll go an' hunt for a job; may-be luck won't be a stepfather to me all my days."

"Stop," cried Tom, "suppose I were to give you something to do, what would you say?"

"Faix, I wouldn't say much, sir," said the Irishman, "but I'd do it."

"Come along with me, then, and if I get any job, I'll get you to help me."

"Oh, then, may long life attend you for puttin' fresh blood in my veins," responded the excited Milesian, giving his already curiously bad hat a deliberate punch in the crown, to show his gratitude and delight.

"Bless his noble, honest, loving heart," cried Polly, as Tom, having impressed his usual kiss upon her lips, started to his labor again. "If it were not for those little fits of discontent every now and then, what a man he'd be; but we can't be all perfect; don't I catch myself thinking silks and satins sometimes, instead of cottons and calicoes? and I'll be bound, if the truth was known, the great folks that wear nothing else but grand things, don't behave a bit better, but keep longing for something a little grander still, so *he* mustn't be blamed, nor he shan't, neither, in my hearing."

CHAPTER III.

THE BOARDING-HOUSE.

TURN we now to the *highly-genteel* establishment where Henry Travers and his young wife are now domiciliated, presided over by a little more than middle-aged, severe-looking personage, who rejoiced in the euphonious name of GRIMGRISKIN; her temper, phraseology, and general disposition may be better illustrated by the conversation which is now going on between her and her two unfortunate inmates. The mid-day accumulation of scraps, which was dignified by the name of dinner, but just over, Henry Travers, in his small, uncomfortable bed-room, was ruminating upon the darkness of his present destiny, when a sharp

knock at his door admonished him that he was about to receive his usual dunning visit from his amiable landlady.

"Come in," he gasped, with the articulation of a person about to undergo a mild species of torture.

"You'll excuse me, good people," said Grimgriskin, "for the intrusion; but business is business, and if one don't attend *to* one's business, it's highly probable one's business will make unto itself wings, and, in a manner of speaking, fly away: not that I want to make you feel uncomfortable. I flatter myself, in this establishment, nobody need be under such a disagreeable apprehension; but houses won't keep themselves, at least *I* never knew any so to do. Lodgings is lodgings, and board is board; moreover, markets—specially at this season of the year—may reasonably be said to be *markets;* beef and mutton don't jump spontaneously into one's hands; promiscuous-like, neither do the hydrants run tea and coffee—at least as far as my knowledge of hydrants goes."

"The plain sense of all this is"—

"Exactly what I am coming to," interrupted the voluble hostess. "I'm a woman of few words; but those few, such as they are, I'm proud to say, are generally to the purpose. I make it a point to send in my bills regularly every month, and I presume that it's not an unreasonable stretch of imagination to expect them to be paid. Now, for the last three months they have come up to you receipted, and down to me with what one might call the autographical corner torn off. Now, as it is not in my nature to make any one feel uncomfortable, and being a woman of very few

words, I would merely intimate to you that rents is rents—and, moreover, must be paid—and mine, I am sorry to observe, is not a singular exception in such respect."

"My dear Mrs. Grim"—

"One moment!" interposed the woman of few words. "Perhaps you may not be aware of the circumstance, but I have my eyes open—and, moreover, my ears—whispers is whispers, and I *have* heard something that *might* make you uncomfortable; but as that is not my principle, I won't repeat it; but talkers, you know, will be talkers, and boarders can never be anything else in the world but boarders."

"What have they dared to say of us?" inquired Henry.

"Nothing—oh! nothing to be repeated—dear, no! I'm proud to observe that my boarders pay regularly every month, and are therefore highly respectable; and respectable boarders make a respectable house, and I wouldn't keep anything else. Thank Heaven, I have that much consideration for my own respectability!"

"May I be permitted to ask what all this amounts to?" asked Henry, with commendable resignation.

"Just two hundred dollars," sharply replied Mrs. Grimgriskin; "being eighty for board, and one hundred and twenty for extras. I'm a woman of few words"—

"And I'm a man of less," said Henry, "I can't pay it."

"I had my misgivings," cried the landlady, tartly, "notwithstanding your boast of being connected with the rich Mr. Granite. Allow me to say, sir," she continued, seating herself upon a chair, "I've just sent for a hackman to take

your trunks away, and I mean to retain the furniture until some arrangement is made."

"May I come in?" murmured a small, but apparently well-known voice at the door, from the alacrity with which Henry's poor, young wife rushed to open it, admitting old Sterling, the clerk.

"Let me look in your eyes," cried she; "is there any hope?"

Sterling shook his head.

"No—no more!"

"Heaven help us!" she exclaimed, as she tottered back to her seat.

"Heaven has helped you, my bright bird," said Sterling. "I only shook my head to make your joy the greater."

"What say you?" exclaimed Travers; "has that stony heart relented?"

"It is not a stony heart," replied Sterling; "I am ashamed of you for saying so. It's a good, generous heart. It has made mine glow with long-forgotten joy this day."

"Does he give us relief?" inquired Henry.

"He does," said the old man, the enthusiasm of generous happiness lighting up his features; "great, enduring relief. What do you think of five thousand dollars?"

"You dream, I dream!" cried Travers, starting up in astonishment; while Mrs. Grimgriskin, smoothing her unamiable wrinkles, and her apron at the same time, at the mention of so *respectable* a sum, came forward, saying, in her newest-lodger voice—

"You'll excuse me; but I'm a woman of few words. I

hope you won't take anything I've said as at all personal to you, but only an endeavor, as far as in me lies, to keep up the credit of my own establishment; as for that little trifle between us, of course you can take your own time about that." So saying, and with a profusion of unnoticed courtesies, she quitted the room.

She had scarcely done so, when, with a deep groan of agony, Sterling pressed his hand against his head, and staggered to a chair. In an instant, Henry and his wife were by his side.

"What is the matter, my dear Sterling?" cried Henry.

"Don't come near me," replied the old clerk, the very picture of despair and wretchedness; "I am the destroyer of your peace, and of my own, for ever. Oh! why was I allowed to see this dreadful day? Curse me, Travers! Bellow in my blunted ear, that my vile sense may drink it in. I've lost it—lost it!"

"Not the money?" exclaimed Henry and his wife at a breath.

"That's right! kill me—kill me! I deserve it!" continued Sterling, in an agony of grief. "Oh! careless, guilty, unhappy old man, that in your own fall must drag down all you love, to share your ruin! lost—lost—lost, for ever!"

"Forgive even the appearance of injustice, my good, kind old friend," soothingly observed Travers. "It is I who am the doomed one. There is no use in striving against destiny."

"Don't, Henry, don't!" gasped the old clerk, through his fast-falling tears. "This kindness is worse than your

reproof. Let me die—let me die! I am not fit to live!" Suddenly starting to his feet, he cried: "I'll run back—perhaps I may find it. Oh! no—no! I cannot; my old limbs, braced up by the thought of bringing you happiness, are weakened by the effect of this terrible reaction!"

"Come—come, old friend, take it not so much to heart!" said Travers, cheering him as well as he could. "There, lean upon me; we'll go and search for it together, and even if it be not found, the loss is not a fatal one, so long as life and health remain."

"You say this but to comfort me, and in your great kindness of heart, dear, dear boy!" cried Sterling, as he rose from the chair, and staggered out to retrace his steps, in the hope of regaining that which had been lost.

CHAPTER IV.

THE PIECE OF LUCK.

It so happened that the very truckman who was sent to take Henry's trunks, was our friend Bobolink, who was plying in the vicinity, and as it was his first job, he was anxious enough to get it accomplished; therefore, a few minutes before Sterling came out, he and his protégé, Bryan, the Irishman, trotted up to the door.

"There! away with you up, and get the trunks," said Bobolink; "I'll wait for you here."

Bryan timidly rung at the bell, and entered. In the meantime, Tom stood at his horse's head, pulling his ears, and having a little confidential chat. Taking out his wallet, he investigated its contents.

"Only fifty cents," he exclaimed, shrugging his shoulders, "and this job will make a dollar—that's all the money in the world."

In putting back his greasy, well-worn wallet, his eye happened to fall upon an object, which made the blood rush with a tremendous bound through his frame. Lying close to the curb, just below his feet, was a large pocket-book.

"Good gracious!" he exclaimed, "what's that? It looks very like"—(picking it up hurriedly, and taking a hasty survey of its contents)—"it is—money—heaps of money—real, good money, and such a lot—all fifties and twenties!" And now a crowd of contending thoughts pressed upon his brow. First, he blessed his good luck; then, he cursed the heaviness of the temptation—he thrust it deep into his bosom; again, he thought he would place it where he found it; at one moment he would whistle, and endeavor to look unconcerned; at another, he would tremble with apprehension. What to do with it, he did not know; but the tempter was too strong; he at last determined to retain it. "It's a windfall," said he to himself; "nobody has seen me take it. Such a large sum of money could not have been lost by a poor person, and nobody wants it more than I do myself. I'll be hanged if I don't keep it!"

Just then Bryan emerged from the door, with a most lachrymose expression of countenance, and was very much astonished to find that his stay did not produce an equally woe-begone effect upon Tom.

"There's no thrunks goin'," said Bryan. "The fellow as was leavin', ain't leavin' yet; because somebody's after leavin' him a lot o' money.

"Come, jump up, then," cried Bobolink, "and don't be wasting time there."

At that moment his eye caught that of Sterling, who, with Travers, had commenced a search for the lost pocket-book. Instinct told him in an instant what their occupation was, and yet he determined to keep the money.

"My man," said Travers to Bryan, "did you see anything of a pocket-book near this door?"

"Is it me?" replied Bryan. "Do I look as if I'd seen it? I wish I had!"

"What for? you'd keep it, I suppose?" observed Travers.

"Bad luck to the keep," replied Bryan; "and to you for thinkin' it! but it's the way of the world—a ragged waistcoat's seldom suspected of hidin' an honest heart."

"Come, old friend," said Henry to Sterling, "these men have not seen it, evidently;" and off they went on their fruitless errand, while a feeling of great relief spread itself over Bobolink's heart at their departure.

"How wild that ould fellow looked," said Bryan.

"Humbug!" replied Bobolink; "it was only put on to make us give up the pocket-book."

"Make us give it up?"

"Yes; that is to say, if we had it. There, don't talk.

I'm sick. I've got an oppression on my chest, and if I don't get relief, I'll drop in the street."

"Indeed, an' somethin's come over ye since mornin', sure enough," said Bryan; "but you've been kind, an' good, an' generous to me, an' may I never taste glory, but if I could do you any good by takin' half yer complaint, I'd do it."

"I dare say you would," replied Tom; "but my constitution's strong enough to carry it all. There, you run home, and tell Polly I'll be back early. I don't want you any more."

As soon as Bryan was off, Bobolink sat down on his truck, and began to ruminate. His first thought was about his wife. "Shall I tell Polly?" thought he. "I've never kept a secret from her yet. But, suppose she wouldn't let me keep it? I shan't say a word about it. I'll hide it for a short time, and then swear I got a prize in the lottery." It suddenly occurred to him that he was still on the spot where he had found the money. "Good Heaven," said he, "why do I linger about here? I must be away—away anywhere! and yet I feel as though I was leaving my life's happiness here. Pooh! lots of money will make any one happy." So saying, and singing—but with most constrained jollity—one of the songs which deep bitterness had called up spontaneously from his heart, he drove to the nearest groggery, feeling assured that he should require an unusual stimulant of liquor, to enable him to fitly bear this accumulation of good luck, which did not justly belong to him.

CHAPTER V.

HOME.

"WHAT a dear, considerate, good-natured husband I have, to be sure! The proudest lady in the land can't be happier than I am in my humble house," said Polly, as she bustled about to prepare for Tom's coming home, having been informed by Bryan that she was to expect him. "Poor fellow! he may well be tired and weary. I must get his bit of supper ready. Hush! that's his footstep," she continued. But something smote her as she noticed the fact, that he was silent. There was no cheering song bursting from his throat—no glad word of greeting; but he entered the door, moody and noiseless. Another glance. Did not her eye deceive her? No! The fatal demon of Liquor had imprinted his awful mark upon his brow. She went up to him, and, in a voice of affection, asked what was the matter.

"Matter? What should be the matter?" he answered, peevishly.

"Don't speak so crossly, Thomas," said she, in a subdued voice; "you know I did not mean any harm."

"Bless your little soul! I know you didn't," he exclaimed, giving her a hearty embrace. "It's me that's the brute."

"Indeed, Thomas, you are nothing of the kind," she went on, the cheerful smile once more on her lip.

"I am, Polly; I insist upon being a brute. Ah! you don't know all."

"All what? you alarm me!"

"I wish I dared tell her," thought Bobolink; "I will! I've found a jolly lot of money to-day, Polly.'

"How much, Thomas?"

"Shall I tell her? I've a great mind to astonish her weak nerves. How much do you think?" cried he, with a singular expression, which Polly attributed but to one terrible cause, and she turned sadly away. That angered him —for men in such moods are captious about trifles. "I won't tell her," said he; "she doesn't deserve it. Well, then, I've earned a *dollar*."

"Only a dollar?" replied Polly. "Well, never mind, dear Thomas, we must make it do; and better a dollar earnt, as you have earnt yours, by your own honest industry, than thousands got in any other way."

Somehow Tom fancied that everything she said was meant as so many digs at him, forgetting, in his insane drunkenness, that she must have been ignorant of what had passed. The consequence was, that he became crosser than ever.

"Why do you keep saying savage things, that you know must aggravate me?" he cried. "I can't eat. Have you any brandy in the house? I have a pain here!" and he clasped his hands upon his breast, where the pocket-book lay concealed. "I think the brandy would relieve me."

"My poor Thomas," replied his wife, affectionately; "something must have happened to annoy you! I never

saw you thus before; but you are so seldom the worse for drink, that I will not upbraid you. The best of men are subject to temptation."

At that word Bobolink started from his seat, and gazing intently in her face, exclaimed—

"What do you mean by that?"

"Why, even you, Thomas, have been tempted to forget yourself," she replied.

"How do you know?" he thundered, his face now sickly pale.

"I can see it in every feature, my poor husband!" said she, sorrowfully, as she quitted the room to get the brandy he required.

"I suppose you can," muttered Bobolink to himself, as he fell into the chair, utterly distracted and unhappy; "everybody can. I'm a marked, miserable man! and for what? I'll take it back; no, no! I can't now, for I've denied it!"

"Something has happened to vex you terribly, my dear husband!" cried Polly, as she returned with a small bottle of brandy.

"Well, suppose there has," replied he, in a loud and angry tone, "is a man accountable to his wife for every moment of his life? Go to bed! Where's the use in whimpering about it? You've had such a smooth road all your life, that the first rut breaks your axle. Come, don't mind me, Polly!" he went on, suddenly changing to a joyous laugh, and yet somewhat subdued by the tears that now flowed down his wife's pale cheeks; "I don't

mean to worry you, but—but you see that I'm a little sprung. Leave me to myself, there's a good girl! Come, kiss me before you go. Ha! ha! I'll make a lady of you yet, Pol! see if I don't. Didn't you hear me tell you to go to bed?"

"Yes, Thomas, but"—

"But what?"

"Pray, drink no more."

"I'll drink just as much as I please; and, moreover, I won't be dictated to by you, when I can buy your whole stock out, root and branch. I've stood your nonsense long enough, so take my advice and start."

"Oh! Thomas—Thomas!" cried his weeping wife, as she hurried to her little bedroom; "never did I expect this, and you'll be sorry for it in the morning."

"Damn it! I am an unfeeling savage. Don't cry, Pol!" he shouted after her, as she quitted the room; "I didn't intend to hurt your feelings, and I won't drink any more, there. Say God bless you before you go in, won't you?"

"God bless you, dear husband!" said the loving wife.

"That's right, Pol!"

As soon as Tom found himself quite alone, he looked carefully at the fastenings of the doors and windows, and having cleared the little table of its contents, proceeded to examine the interior of the pocket-book. With a tremulous hand and a quick-beating heart, he drew it forth, starting at the slightest sound; tearing it open, he spread the thick bundle of notes before him; the sight seemed to dazzle his eye-sight; his breath became heavy and suffoca

ting; there was more, vastly more, than he had ever dreamed of.

"What do I see?" he cried, while his eyes sparkled with the fire of suddenly-awakened avarice, "tens—fifties—hundreds—I do believe—thousands! I never saw such a sight before. What sound was that? I could have sworn I heard a small voice call out my name. For the first time in my life, I feel like a coward. I never yet feared to stand before a giant! now, a boy might cow me down. Pshaw! it's because I'm not used to handling money."

Again and again, he tried to count up how much the amount was, but grew confused, and had to give it up.

"Never mind how much there is," he cried, at last; "it's mine—all mine! nobody saw me; nobody knows it: nobody—but one—but one!" he continued, looking upward for an instant, and then, clasping his hands together, and leaning his head over the money, he wept bitter tears over his great *Piece of Luck.*

CHAPTER VI.

THE WILL.

At a splendid escritoir Mr. Granite sat, in his own room, surrounded by the luxurious appliances which wait upon wealth, however acquired. The face of the sitter is deadly

pale, for he is alone, and amongst his most private papers. He has missed one, upon which the permanence of his worldly happiness hung. Diligently has he been searching for that small scrap of paper, which contained the sentence of death to his repute. Oh! the agony of that suspense! It could not have been abstracted, for it was in a secret part of his writing-desk; although by the simplest accident in the world it had now got mislaid; yet was he destined not to recover it. In hastily taking out some papers, it had dropped through the opening of the desk, which was a large one, upon the carpet, where it remained, unperceived. In the midst of his anxious and agonized search, there was a knock at the door, and even paler and more heart-broken than the merchant himself, Sterling tottered into the room.

"Well, my good Sterling," said the merchant, with a great effort stifling his own apprehension, "I am to be troubled no more by that fellow's pitiful whinings. I was a fool to be over-persuaded; but benevolence is my failing —a commendable one, I own—but still a failing."

"I am glad to hear you say that, sir, for you now have a great opportunity to exercise it."

"Ask me for nothing more, for I have done"— interrupted Granite; fancying for an instant that he might have placed the missing document in a secret place, where he was sometimes in the habit of depositing matters of the first importance, he quitted the room hurriedly.

"Lost! lost, for ever! I have killed the son of my old benefactor!" cried Sterling. "He can't recover from the

shock—nor I—nor I! my heart is breaking—to fall from such a height of joy into such a gulf of despair—I, who could have sold my very life to bring him happiness." At that moment his eye caught a paper which lay on the carpet, and with the instinct of a clerk's neatness solely, he picked it up and put it on the table before him. "The crime of self-destruction is great," he continued, "but I am sorely tempted. With chilling selfishness on one side, and dreadful misery on the other, life is but a weary burden." Carelessly glancing at the paper which he had taken from the floor, he read the name of Travers; he looked closely at it, and discovered that it was an abstract of a will. Curiosity prompted him to examine it, and his heart gave one tremendous throb, when he discovered it to bear date after the one by which Henry, in a fit of anger, was disinherited by his father.

The old man fell upon his knees, and if ever a fervent, heartfelt prayer issued from the lips of mortal, he then prayed that he might but live to see that great wrong righted.

He had but just time to conceal the paper within his breast, when Granite returned.

"You here yet?" he cried. "Have I not done enough to-day? What other beggarly brat do you come suing for?"

"For none, dear sir," said Sterling. "I would simply test that benevolence, of which you spoke but now—the money which you sent to Travers"—

"Well, what of it?"

"I have lost!"

"Pooh! old man," continued the other, contemptuously, "don't think to deceive me by such a stale device; that's a very old trick."

"You don't believe me?"

"No."

"After so many years!" cried the old man, with tear-choked utterance.

"The temptation was too much for you," bitterly replied the merchant. The old leaven exhibited itself once more. "You remember"—

"Silence, sir!" cried the old man, drawing up his aged form into sudden erectness, while the fire of indignation illumined his lustreless eye. "The majesty of my integrity emboldens me to say that, even to you—your cruel taunt has wiped out all of feeling that I had for you—fellow-sinner, hast thou not committed an error also?"

"Insolent! how dare you insinuate?"

"I don't insinuate; I speak out; nay, not an error, but a *crime*. I *know* you have, and can prove it."

"Away, fool! you are in your dotage."

"A dotage that shall wither you in your strength, and strip you of your ill-bought possessions," exclaimed the old man, with nearly the vigor of youth; "since Humanity will not prompt you to yield up a portion of your *stolen* wealth, Justice shall force you to deliver it all—aye, all!"

"Villain! what riddle is this?" cried Granite, with a vague presentiment that the missing paper was in some way connected with this contretemps.

"A riddle easily solved," answered Sterling. "Behold

its solution, if your eyes dare look at it! A will, devising all the property you hold to Henry Travers! There are dozens who can swear to my old employer's signature. Stern, proper justice should prompt me to vindicate his son's cause; yet, I know that he would not purchase wealth at the cost of your degradation. Divide equally with him, and let the past be forgotten."

There was but one way that Granite could regain his vantage-ground, and he was not the man to shrink from it.

With a sudden bound, he threw himself upon the weak old clerk, and snatching the paper from him, exclaimed—

"You shallow-pated fool! think you that you have a child to deal with? The only evidence that could fling a shadow across my good name would be your fragment of miserable breath, which I could take, and would, as easily as brush away a noxious wasp, but that I despise you too entirely to feel your sting. Go, both of you, and babble forth your injuries to the world! go, and experience how poor a conflict starveling honesty in rags can wage against iniquity when clad in golden armor! I defy ye all! Behold how easily I can destroy all danger to myself, and hope to him at once." So saying, he held the paper to the lamp, and, notwithstanding the ineffectual efforts of Sterling to prevent it, continued so to hold it until a few transitory sparks were all that remained of Henry Travers's inheritance.

Sterling said not a syllable, but, with a glance at the other, which had in it somewhat of inspiration, pointed upward, and slowly staggered from the room.

CHAPTER VII.

MORNING THOUGHTS.

The early grey of dawn peeped furtively through the shutters of Tom Bobolink's home, and as they strengthened and strengthened, fell upon a figure which could scarcely be recognized as the same joyous-hearted individual of the day before. On the floor lay Tom; the candle, which had completely burned out in its socket, close to his head; one hand grasped the empty bottle, and the other was tightly clutched within his breast.

And now another scarcely less sorrowful-looking figure is added. Polly gazes, with tearful eyes, upon the prostrate form. He is evidently in the maze of some terrible dream, for his head rolls fearfully about, his limbs are convulsed, and his breathing is thick and heavy.

Polly stooped down to awake him gently, when, at the slightest touch, he started at one bound to his feet, muttering incoherent words of terror and apprehension; his eyes rolled about wildly. He seized Polly, and held her at arms' length for an instant, until he fairly realized his actual situation, when he burst into a loud laugh, that chilled his poor wife's very blood.

"Ha! ha! Pol, is that you?" he cried, wildly. "I've been a bad boy, I know; but I'll make up for it gloriously,

my girl. Ugh! what a dream I've had. Ah! the darkness is a terrible time to get over when one's conscience is filling the black night with fiery eyes." Then, turning to his wife, he said, loudly: "Polly, darling, I'm ashamed of myself; but it will be all right by and by. You were cut out for a rich woman, Pol."

"Dear Thomas, let me be rich in the happiness of our humble home; 'tis all I ask."

"Oh, nonsense! Suppose now you got a heap of money a prize in the lottery, wouldn't you like to elevate your little nose, and jostle against the big bugs in Broadway?"

"Not at the price of our comfort, Thomas," she answered, solemnly.

"You're a fool! Money can buy all sorts of comfort."

"What do you mean, Thomas, by those hints about money? has anything happened?"

"Oh! no—no!" he replied, quickly, turning his eyes away; "but there's no knowing when something might. Now I'll try her," thought he. "It's my dream, Pol. Shall I tell it to you?"

"Do, my dear Tom. Oh! I'm so glad to see you yourself once more."

"Well, dear," he continued, sitting close to her, and placing his arm around her waist, "I dreamed that as I was returning from a job, what should I see in the street, under my very nose, but a pocket-book, stuffed full of money. Presently the owner came along. He asked me if I had found it. I said no, and came home a rich man—oh! so rich!"

"I know your heart too well, Tom, to believe that such a thing could happen except in a dream," said his wife, to his great annoyance. He started up, and after one or two turns about the little, now untidy, room, exclaimed, angrily:

"Why not? I should like to know if fortune did—I mean—was, to fling luck in my way, do you think I'd be such a cursed fool as not to grab at it?"

"Thomas, you have been drinking too much," said she, sadly.

"No, no," he interrupted, "not enough; give me some more."

"Not a drop, husband," she replied, seriously, and with determination. "If you will poison yourself it shall not be through my hand."

"Don't be a fool," he cried, savagely, "or it may be the worse for you. I'm master of my own house, I think."

"Home! ah, Thomas, some evil spirit has stolen away our once happy home for ever," said Polly, as she slowly and sorrowfully returned again to weep in the silence of her own room.

"There has, there has," cried Tom, as she quitted him. "And this is it"—pulling out the pocket-book, which he had not left hold of for an instant, and frowning desperately at it—"Confound your skin, it's you that has stolen away our comfort. I'll take the cursed thing back; I wouldn't have Polly's eyes wet with sorrow to be made of money—I'll take it back this very blessed morning; and somehow that thought brings a ray of sunlight back to my heart." So saying, he thrust the pocket-book, as he

thought, safely within his vest, but in his eagerness to take extra care of it, it slipped through, and dropped upon the floor; his mind being taken off for a moment by the entrance of Bryan, to tell him that the horse and truck were ready.

"Very well, I'm glad of it," cried Tom. "Now I'll see what the fine, bracing, morning air will do for this cracked head of mine; now then, to take this back," and he slapped his chest, under the full impression that the pocket-book was there. "Bryan, I don't want you for half an hour; just wait till I come back, will you?"

"That I will, sir, and welcome," said Bryan, and with a merry song once more at his lip, and a cheerful good-bye to Polly, to whose heart both brought comfort in her great sadness, Bobolink mounted his truck, and trotted off.

Meantime Bryan, now left alone in the room, dived into the recesses of his capacious coat-pocket, and producing from thence a piece of bread and cheese, moralized the while upon the pleasant change in his prospects.

"Long life to this tindher-hearted couple," said he. "Shure an' I'm on the high road to good luck at last; plenty of the best in the way of atin', and an elegant stable to sleep in, with a Christian-like quadruped for company; av I had only now a trifle o' money to get myself some clothes—these things doesn't look well in this part of the world," casting his eyes down in not over-delighted contemplation of his nether integuments. "A little bit o' money now would make me so happy an' industrious, I could take the buzz out of a hive o' bees. The saints be-

tween us and all mischief, what's that?" he continued, starting to his feet, as his glance fell upon the pocket-book which Tom had dropped. "It serves me right," he went on, his face suddenly becoming pale as paper, "to wish for any such thing. I don't want it—it was all a mistake,' cried he, apologetically. "This is the devil's work; no sooner do I let a word out o' me mouth, that I didn't mane at all at all, but the evil blaggard sticks a swadge of temptation right before me. I won't have it—take it away."

At that instant Polly returned into the room. "Take care how you come—don't walk this way," said Bryan. "Look!"

"What is it?" cried Polly, in alarm.

"Timptation!" shouted Bryan. "I was foolish enough just now to wish for a trifle of money, and may I niver see glory if that lump of a pocket-book didn't sprout up before me very eyes."

"Pocket-book, eh?" cried Polly, seizing it in her hands, despite of the comic apprehension of Bryan, who insisted that it would burn her fingers. The whole truth flashed across her mind at once. Tom's dream was no dream, but a reality, and the struggle in his mind whether to keep or return it, had caused that sleepless and uncomfortable night. "Bryan,"-said she, quickly, "did you hear any one say that they had lost any money yesterday?"

"Let me see," replied the other. "Yes, to be sure, 44 came out of the hall-door, and axed me if I saw a pocket-book."

"It must be his. Thank God for this merciful dispensa

tion," cried the agitated wife. "Quick, quick, my bonnet and shawl, and come you, Bryan, you know the place; this money must be that which was lost."

"I'm wid you, ma'am," answered Bryan. "Who knows but that may be the identical pocket-book; at any rate it'll do as well if there's as much money in it, and if there isn't, there'll be another crop before we come back."

CHAPTER VIII.

RETRIBUTION.

SNUGLY ensconced in his own particular apartment, Mr. Granite had flung himself in post-prandial *abandon* into his easiest of easy-chairs. Leisurely, and with the smack of a true connoisseur, he dallied with a glass of exquisite Madeira. The consciousness of the enviable nature of his worldly position never imbued him so thoroughly as at such a moment. Business was flourishing, his health was excellent, and his son, on whom he concentrated all the affection of which his heart was capable, had recently distinguished himself at a college examination. Everything, in fact, seemed to him *couleur de rose*.

It can readily be imagined that to be disturbed at such a period of enjoyment was positive high treason against the home majesty of the mercantile monarch.

Fancy, therefore, what a rude shock it was to his quiet, when he was informed that Mr. Sterling wished to see him on a matter of the greatest importance. "I cannot, I will not see him, or anybody," said the enraged potentate; "you know, he knows, my invariable rule. It must not be infringed, for any one whatever, much less for such a person," and, closing his eyes in a spasm of self-sufficiency, he again subsided into calmness, slightly ruffled, however, by the outrageous attack upon his privacy.

He had just succeeded in restoring his disturbed equanimity, when he was once more startled into ill-humor by the sound of voices as if in altercation, and a sharp knock at the chamber-door.

The next instant, to his still greater surprise and anger, the old clerk, Sterling, who had been ignominiously dismissed since the last interview between him and Granite, stood before him. Every particle of his hitherto meekness and humility had apparently vanished, as for a few moments he regarded the merchant with a fixed and penetrating look.

"What villainous intrusion is this? Where are my servants? How dare they permit my home to be thus invaded?" cried Granite, with flashing eyes and lowering brow.

"I am here, not for myself," replied Sterling, calmly, "but for the victim of your rapacity—of your terrible guilt. I have intruded upon you at this unusual time to inform you of the extremity in which Travers is placed, and from my carelessness—my criminal carelessness. Will you not at least remedy that?"

"No!" thundered the exasperated merchant. "Your indiscreet zeal has ruined both you and those for whom you plead. I'll have nothing to do with any of ye—begone!"

"Not before I have cautioned you that my lips, hitherto sealed for fear of injury to him, shall henceforward be opened. Why should I hesitate to denounce one who is so devoid of common charity?"

"Because no one will believe you," responded the other, with a bitter sneer. "The denunciations of a discharged servant are seldom much heeded; empty sounds will be of no avail. Proof will be needed in confirmation, and where are you to find that?"

"Ah! where, indeed! you have taken care of that; but have you reflected that there *is* a power to whom your machinations, your schemes of aggrandizement, are as flimsy as the veriest gossamer web?" solemnly ejaculated Sterling.

"Canting sways me as little as your hurtless threats. What I have, I shall keep in spite of"—

"Heaven's justice?" interposed the old clerk.

"In spite of anything or everything," savagely replied the irritated merchant. "You have your final answer, nor is it in the power of angel or devil to alter it; and so, the sooner you relieve me from your presence the better I will like it, and the better it may be for your future prospects."

"Of *my* future, God knows, I take no care; but for the sake of those poor young things, so cruelly left to struggle with a hard, hard world, I feel that I have strength even

to oppose the stern rock of your obstinacy, almost hopeless though the effort may be. I am going," he went on, seeing the feverish impatience working in Granite's face, "but, as a parting word, remember that my dependence is not in my own ability to unmask your speciousness, or contend against the harshness of your determination. No, I surrender my case and that of my clients into *His* hands who never suffers the guilty to triumph to the end. The avalanche falls sometimes on the fruitfullest vineyards, as well as on the most sterile waste."

"By Heaven! you exhaust my patience," roared the other, as he rung the servants' bell impetuously; "since you will not go of your own accord, I must indignantly thrust you forth into the street like a cur."

"There shall be no need of that," meekly replied the clerk, turning to leave the apartment, just as the servant entered, bringing a letter for Mr. Granite on a silver waiter.

The latter was about to address an angry sentence to the servant, when he perceived that the letter he carried was enclosed in an envelope deeply bordered with black.

His heart gave one mighty throb as he snatched it—tearing it open, and gasping with some terrible presentiment of evil, he but glanced at the contents, and with a fearful shriek fell prostrate.

Sterling rushed to his side, and with the aid of the servant, loosed his neckcloth, and placed him in a chair, using what immediate remedies he could command in the hope of restoring animation. It was some minutes before the stricken man, clutched from his pride of place in the wink-

ing of an eyelid, gave signs of returning vitality. During his unconsciousness, Sterling ascertained from the open letter lying at his feet, that the merchant's son, the sole hope of his existence, for whom he had slaved and toiled, set at naught all principle, and violated even the ties of kindred and of honesty, had died suddenly at college. No previous illness had given the slightest shadow of an apprehension. He had quietly retired to his bed at his usual hour on the previous night, and in the morning was found stark and cold. None knew the agony which might have preceded dissolution. No friendly tongue was nigh to speak of consolation; no hand to do the kindly offices of nature.

Slowly, slowly and painfully the wretched parent returned to consciousness, and with it, the terrible reality of his bereavement. Glaring around him fiercely: "Where am I?—what is this?—why do you hold me?" he cried, madly. At this instant his glance fell upon the fatal letter; "Oh, God! I know it all—all! my son! my son!" Turning upon Sterling, fiercely, he grasped him by the throat. "Old man," he cried, "you have murdered him! you, and that villain Travers!" Then he relaxed his gripe, and in an agony of tears, fell to supplication. "It cannot be—it shall not be—oh! take me to him—what am I to do? Sterling, my old friend, oh, forgive me—pity me—let us away." He tried to stand, but his limbs were paralyzed. "The judgment has fallen—I feared it—I expected it, but not so suddenly—it may be that there is still hope—hope, though ever so distant. Perhaps a quick atonement may

avert the final blow. Quick, Sterling—give me paper, and pen." They were brought. "Now write," he continued, his voice growing fainter and fainter: "I give Travers all —all—if this late repentance may be heard, and my son should live. I know I can rely on his benevolence—quick, let me sign it, for my strength is failing fast."

With extreme difficulty, he appended his signature to the document Sterling had drawn up at his desire. When it was done, the pen dropped from his nerveless grasp, his lips moved for an instant as though in prayer—the next—he was—nothing!

CHAPTER IX.

SUNLIGHT.

Our scene shifts back to Mrs. Grimgriskin's elegant establishment, where poor Travers' affairs are once more in a very dilapidated state, as may be inferred from the conversation now progressing.

"People as can't pay," said the now curt landlady, smoothing down an already very smooth apron, "needn't to have no objections, I think, to turn out in favor of them as can. I'm a woman of few words—very few indeed. I don't want to make myself at all disagreeable; but impossibles *is* impossibles, and I can't provide without I have the means to do so with."

"My good lady," interposed Travers, "do pray give me a little time; my friend Sterling has again applied to Mr. Granite"—

"Pooh! I'm sick of all such excuses; one word for all—get your trunks ready. I'd rather lose what you owe me than let it get any bigger, when there's not the remotest chance, as I can see, for its liquidation; and, dear me, how lucky—I declare there's the very truckman who came the other day. I'll tell him to stop, for I don't mind giving you all the assistance I can, conveniently with my own interest."

So saying, she hailed Tom Bobolink, who was indeed looking somewhat wistfully towards the house. He was just cogitating within his mind what excuse he could make to get into the place, and so rid himself of his unfortunate good fortune at once.

"You trunks, I presume from appearance, won't take a long time to get ready," said the delicate Grimgriskin. "Here, my man; just come in here," she continued, as Tom, in a state of considerable trepidation, entered the room; "this young man will have a job for you." The poor wife now joined Travers, and on inquiring the cause of the slight tumult, was told by Henry that she must prepare to seek an asylum away from the hospitable mansion which had recently afforded them a shelter.

"Come, my love," said he, with a tolerable effort at cheerfulness, "let us at once leave this mercenary woman's roof."

"Mercenary, indeed!" the landlady shrieked after them,

as they entered their own room. "Because a person won't suffer themselves to be robbed with their eyes open, they're mercenary. The sooner my house is cleared of such rubbish, the better. Mercenary, indeed!" and with an indignant toss of her false curls, she flounced out of the room.

"Now for it!" cried Tom; "the coast is clear; what the deuce shall I do with it? I dare not give it openly· suppose I say I found it under the sophia. Egad, that will do famously; here goes." So saying, he plunged his hand into his bosom, and to his horror and consternation it was not there; his blood froze in his veins for an instant, then deluged him with a perfect thaw of perspiration. "Oh, miserable, miserable wretch, I've lost it, I've lost it; what is to become of me!" In vain he searched and searched; it was clean gone. "Oh, how can I face Polly again!" he groaned. "My life is made unhappy for ever; cursed, cursed luck. That ever my eyes fell upon the thing at all: ha!" a shadowy hope flitted across him, that he might have left it at home. "Could I have been so drunken a fool as to leave it behind me? if so, where is it now? At all events, I must go back as fast as I can, for if I cannot recover it, my God! I shall go mad." With a few big jumps he reached the street, and hastily mounting his truck, drove rapidly home, unmindful of the public observation his demented look and unusual haste produced.

A short time after Tom's sudden departure, which was a perfect mystery to Mrs. Grimgriskin, and also to Henry and his wife, a timid ring was heard at the hall-door, and soon Travers, to whom every sound brought increase of appre-

hension, trembled as he became aware of an altercation between his irate landlady and the new comers, whoever they were.

"I tell you I must see 44, the man that had the thrunks, goin' away a few days agone," said an unmistakably Irish voice, rich and round.

"Oh, if you please, ma'am," placidly continued a small, silvery one.

The dispute, however, was very suddenly cut short by the owner of the loud voice exclaiming, "Arrah, get out o' the road, you cantankerus witch of Endher," and O'Bryan and Polly rushed up the stairs without further ceremony. The door of Travers' room was flung open. "Ha! ha!" cried O'Bryan, "there he is, every inch of him; that's 44; long life to you; and it's glad I am I've found you, and glad you'll be yourself, I'm thinkin', if a trifle o' money will do yez any good."

"What's the matter with you, my friend, what do you seek from me?" demanded Travers.

"Oh, sir, I beg your pardon for breaking in upon you so suddenly," said Polly, "but have you lost any money!"

"I have, indeed," replied Henry, "a large sum; do you know anything about it?"

"Yes, sir," cried Polly, with a radiant flash of her eyes, "Here it is;" handing over the wallet, with its contents, with a sigh of the greatest possible relief. "Tell me one thing, sir," she hesitatingly went on, "was it—was it—taken from you?"

"No, my good woman, it was lost by an old friend of mine, dropped, he believes, in the street."

"It was, sir, just as you say, thank Heaven for it. Yes, sir; my husband found it. Is it all there, sir? oh, pray relieve me by saying it is."

"Yes, every penny."

"Then, sir, whatever joy you may feel at its restoration cannot equal what I feel at this moment," said Polly, while the tears gushed forth unrestrainedly from her eyes.

"Here, my good woman, you must take a portion and give it to your honest husband," said Henry, handing to her a liberal amount of the sum.

"Not a shilling, sir, not a shilling," Polly firmly repeated. "I hate to look at it."

"Then would you, my friend, take some reward," continued he, addressing O'Bryan.

"Is it me? not av you were me father, I wouldn't," said the Irishman, with a look of horror. "I know where it came from; bedad I know the very soil it sprouted out of. I'll tell you how it was, sir. You see I was sittin' by myself, and, like an ungrateful blaggard as I am, instead of thankin' the blessed Heavens for the good luck that had fell a-top o' me, what should I do but wish I had a bit o' money, for to dress up my ugly anatomy, when all at once that swadge of temptation dropped on the floor before my very face."

"Don't heed him, sir, he knows not what he talks about," said Polly. "It is all as I told you, sir. My husband" —

She was interrupted by O'Bryan, who cried, "Here he

comes. May I niver stir if he doesn't, skelpin' along the street in a state of disthractitude; by me sowl it's here he's coming, too."

"Yes, I know," said Henry, "he is employed, I believe, by our worthy landlady, to remove our things."

At this moment Tom burst into the room, but on seeing Polly and O'Bryan he stopped short, as if arrested by a lightning stroke. "You here, Polly? have you heard of my crime," he said, wildly: but she restrained him by gently laying her hand upon his arm.

"Yes, Tom," she said, quietly, "I know all about it, and so does this gentleman. I have restored the money."

"What?" exclaimed Bobolink, while a thrill of joy went through his frame; "is this true?"

"Hush! husband, dear, hush!" she continued; "I did as you told me, you know. I have brought and given back the lost money to its owner. You know you left it at home for me to take."

"Ah, Polly, I wish I could tell this fellow that," said Tom, laying his hand upon his heart; "but I did intend to give it back. I did, by all my hopes of happiness."

"I know you did, my dear Tom," replied Polly, earnestly. "Your true heart could not harbor a bad thought long."

"My good friend," said Travers, approaching the truckman. "Your wife has refused any reward for this honest act."

"She's right, sir, she's right," interrupted the other.

"At least you'll let me shake you by the hand, and proffer you my friendship?"

"I can't, Poll, I can't," said Tom, aside, to his wife. "I'm afraid—I'm half a scoundrel yet—I know I am; but I've learned a wholesome lesson, and while I have life I'll strive to profit by it."

Urged to it by Polly, he did, however, shake hands with Travers and his wife, just as old Sterling, his face shrouded in gloom, and Mrs. Grimgriskin, stiff and tigerish, entered the room.

"Ah, Sterling, my good old friend, rejoice with us—this honest fellow has found, and restored the money lost," said Travers, gaily; "but, how is this? you don't join in our gladness. Has that old rascal"—

"Hold!" interrupted the old clerk, in an earnest voice, and impressive manner; "Heaven has avenged your wrongs in a sudden and fearful manner. Mr. Granite is dead."

"Dead!" exclaimed Henry, in a subdued tone; "with him let his misdeeds be buried. His son will perhaps be more merciful; he will inherit"—

"He has inherited—his father's fate," solemnly replied the old clerk. "Justice may slumber for a while, but retribution must come at last. You are now, by the merchant's will, his sole heir."

"Ho, ho!" thought Mrs. Grimgriskin, who had been an attentive listener, "I'm a woman of few words, but if I had been a woman of less, perhaps it would be more to my interest; but sudden millionaires are usually generous;" and so, smoothing her feline demeanor into quietude, she approached Travers.

"Allow me most sincerely to congratulate you upon your good fortune," she simpered. "Apropos, the first floor is somewhat in arrear; lovely apartments, new carpet, bath, hot water"

"Plenty of that, I'll be bail," remarked O'Bryan; "arrah, howld yer prate, Mrs. Woman-of-few-words—don't you see there's one too many here?"

"Then why don't you go, you ignorant animal," sharply suggested the other.

"Because I'm not the *one*."

Suffice it to say, Henry, with his young wife, and dear old Sterling, were soon installed in a house of their own, and, to their credit, never lost sight of the interest of Tom Bobolink and Polly, who from that day increased in content and prosperity.

As for O'Bryan, the last intimation we had of his well-doing, was the appearance of sundry gigantic street-bills, which contained the following announcement:

VOTE FOR

THE PEOPLES' FRIEND.

O'BRYAN,

FOR ALDERMAN.

THE TIPPERARY VENUS.

Amongst a people so simple-hearted and enthusiastic as the Irish, it is not at all surprising that a firm and implicit belief in supernal agency should be almost universal. To vivid imaginations, ever on the stretch for the romantic, yearning ever for something beyond the dull realities of commonplace existence, there is something extremely fascinating in the brain revellings of Fairy Land.

Now the Irish fairies are very numerous, and all as well classified, and their varied occupations defined and described by supernaturalists, as though they really were amongst the things that be. The "learned pundits" in such matters declare that the economy of human nature is entirely carried on through their agency. Philosophers have demonstrated the atomic vitality of the universe, and the believer in fairies simply allots them their respective places and duties in the general distribution. They tell you that every breath of air, every drop of water, every leaf and flower, teems with actual life. Myriads of tiny atomies, they say, are employed carrying on the business of existence, animal, vegetable, and atmospheric. Here are crowds of industrious little chemists, extracting dew from moonbeams, which they

deliver over to relays of fairy laborers, by them to be applied to the languishing grass. The noxious exhalations of the earth are, by a similar process, gathered from decaying vegetation, and dispersed or condensed into refreshing rain. The warm sunbeams are by them brought down and scattered through the fields; it is the beautiful ministry of one class to breathe upon, and gently force open, the budding blossoms, while another seduously warms and nurtures the ripening corn, and tends the luscious fruits. Mischievous fellows there also are, whose delight it is to try and frustrate the exertions of the workers. They travel from place to place, loaded with malign influences; blight and mildew, and all the destructive agents that blast the hopes of the agriculturist are under their control; and, with an industry nearly equal to their opponents, they employ their time in training caterpillars and other devouring insects to assist them in the work of desolation.

Many are the battles, we are informed, that occur between the two opposing classes, and it depends upon which side has the best of the contest what the result may be to the defeated object; whether they contend for the life of some delicate flower, or whether the poor farmer's toils were to be rewarded or rendered hopeless by the safety or the destruction of his entire crops.

But to leave this fanciful, and, it must be admitted, poetical theory, our business now is with an individual of a highly responsible class in the world of Fairydom—*The Leprechaun.* A most important personage he is; being the custodian of all hidden treasure, it is he who fabricates the

gold within the rock-encircled laboratory. The precious gems, the diamond, sapphire, ruby, amethyst, emerald, and all the world-coveted jewels, are in the safe guardianship of the Leprechaun; and fatal it is to him when aught is discovered and torn from his grasp—for his fairy existence, his immortal essence, is lost with it; he can no longer sport through the air, invisible to mortal ken, but is compelled to take a tangible form, and to work at a degrading occupation—that of making and mending the shoes of his former fairy companions.

The experiences of the writer of this sketch in fairy lore and anecdote, were mostly gathered from a wild, Tipperary sort of cousin, some dozens of times removed, one Roderick O'Callaghan—familiarly Rory—or as, by an easy corruption, he was known "the country round," Roarin' O'Callaghan, who, in his time, had gathered them from the wilder henchmen and followers by whom he was surrounded, when, a devil-may-care gossoon, he wandered among the *Galtie mountains*, the especial pet and persecutor of the entire neighborhood.

Many and many were the mischievous pranks recorded of young Rory. I almost wish that I had begun with the determination of recounting a few of them; but, as I have set myself another task, I must defer that intention until a future opportunity. I am not at all certain still, but that my erratic nib—for I write "*currente calamo*," and without much especial method—may diverge from the grand current of narrative, and, in spite of myself, imperceptibly stray into the now interdicted by-way.

It was from Rory that I heard the strange tale I am now about to relate. Desperate boy-rivals were we, at that time, I must tell you, for the affectionate regards of a young beauty who played old Harry with the juvenile susceptibilities of the whole vicinage. Ah! now that my memory has reverted to that epoch, digression is inevitable. Lovely Polly O'Connor!—bless my soul; a sigh, even at this distant period; how very tenacious these boy-attachments are. I see her as plainly now, mentally pictured, as though in very deed she stood before me.

Both Rory and I endeavored, in the ardent enthusiasm of our fledgling passion, to give vent to the burning thoughts that flamed within us, through the lover's peculiar channel —poetry. My own extraordinary effusion I remember—his I have preserved, and although, at the time, I knew well which was best entitled to the world's consideration, I submit both productions now without a remark. They will at least serve for a description, however insufficient, of our inspiratress.

I had an immense advantage over my competitor in one instance; for, having an acquaintance in the editorial department of the local newspaper, my lucubration lent a lustre to the poets' corner, while, I am ashamed to confess, I exerted, successfully, the same influence to keep Rory's out; it was was ungenerous, I own, unpardonable; but what won't a boy-rival do to clear the onward path before the impetuosity of a first love.

But here is the affair, just as it appeared in the Tipperary Gazette, headed, as I thought, with becoming modesty:

LINES TO A YOUNG LADY.

I will not venture to compare
Those flashing eyes
To sunny skies;
To threads of gold thy wealth of hair;
Thy cheek unto the rose's glow;
Thy polished brow,
To lilies glancing in the light,
Or Parian white;
Thy bosom to the virgin snow—
For these
Are weak and well-worn similies.

Thine eyes are like—like—let me see;
The violet's hue,
Reflected through
A drop of dew;
No, that won't do.
No semblance true
In ample nature can there be
To equal their intensity—
Their heavenly blue.
T'were just as vain to seek,
Through every flower to match thy glowing cheek.
No gold could shed
Such radiant glory as ensaints thy head.
Besides, I now remember,
Your golden tresses are but flattered red,
And thine are living amber,
As, when 'tis ripest through the waving corn,
The sunbeams glance upon a harvest morn.

To the pale lustre of thy brow,
The lily's self perforce must bow—
The marbles cold,
And very old;
Thy bosom as the new-fallen snow

Is quite
As white,
And melts as soon with Love's warm glow.
But then,
While that receives an early stain,
Thy purer bosom doth still pure remain.

Since, to my mind,
I cannot find
A simile of any kind,
I argue hence
Thou art the sense
And spirit of all excellence;
The charm-bestowing fount, from whence
Fate doth dispense
Its varied bounties to the fair,
The loveliest of whom but share
A portion of the gifts thou well canst spare.

It will scarcely be credited, that after that brilliant compliment to Polly's charms, the little jilt, her well-fortified heart not being assailable by Parnassian pellets, looked still colder upon the suffering perpetrator. However, the persevering nature of my passion—and, indeed, it was then a real one—was not to be set aside by rebuffs. Again and again I returned to the attack, and, pen in hand, racked my unfortunate brains through all the strategy of acrostics, birth-day odes, and sonnets. It was not until some time afterwards that I discovered the real reason of my ill-success. The writing of the "Lines" was, perhaps, a pardonable liberty, but printing them was atrocious; so that, in fact, my unworthy suppression of Rory's concoctions brought its own punishment—not that he was a bit more successful than I, for, as we soon became sensibly aware,

the charming, but conscienceless little coquette had even more strings to her bow than she could conveniently fiddle with; indeed, that there wasn't a decent-looking boy in the academy that she didn't encourage, or seem to encourage, so generalizing was her flirtation system.

And, after all, to *decline* upon foxy Tom Gallagher, the more than middle-aged Dispensary doctor, a long, straggling, splay-footed disciple of Æsculapius, with a head of hair like a door-mat—that she has time and again watched and laughed her little ribs sore at, as he shuffled along the street. Ah! Polly O'Connor!

But, allow me to present to your notice Rory's poetical offering at her inexorable feet. It is, as you may perceive, ambitious, and, however I might have underrated its merits at one time, I *now* think it smacks somewhat of the old Elizabethan relish.

Judge for yourself:

Upon some sly affair
Connubially dishonest—
Vide Lempriere—
Jupiter was *non est*.
And dame Juno thought
Scandal and écarté
Consolation brought,
So gave a little party.

Soon the Graces three
Came, in evening dresses,
Very fond of tea
They were, with water-cresses.
Venus came, and son,
Who richly did deserve a
Birching for the fun
He made of Miss Minerva.

Soon an earthly guest
 Came by invitation,
And, among the rest,
 Created a sensation.
My Polly 'twas, and she
 Perfection so resembled,
For her sov'reignty
 The Queen of Beauty trembled.

After tea there came
 A gambling speculation,
Bringing with the game,
 Celestial perturbation.
For my Polly, then,
 Playing with discretion,
From each goddess won
 All her rich possession.

Pallas lost her mind,
 With wit and wisdom glowing;
Aphrodite pined
 To see her beauty going.
Juno speedily
 Lost her regal presence;
And the Graces three,
 Lost their very essence.

On this earthly ball
 My Polly thus alighted,
With the gifts of all
 The goddesses united.
Is it strange that she,
 Without much endeavor,
Quickly won from me
 Heart and soul for ever?

These fiery manifestations, however, had not the slightest effect upon the arctic nature of the frigid Polly. To be

sure, her smile was still "kindly, but frosty," to reverse the Shakespearean aphorism, and as it was dispensed with due impartiality amongst the entire school of her admirers, none were driven to immediate despair, but each flattered himself at the time being that he was the favored one. Our limited supply of pocket-money was transmuted into rings and brooches, for Polly had an inordinate, or rather, the usual predilection of her sex, for *bijouterie*, and as the rings on trees denote the number of years that have rolled over their leafy heads, so the corresponding trophies upon Polly's taper fingers, denoted the amount of her victims.

The majority of her swains began, however, to slacken in their attentions, finally dropping off one by one, until the course was left to Rory and me—praiseworthy examples of a constancy of many months, although as yet not fully known to each other. It was about this time that rumors began to reach us that old Tom Gallagher, the red-headed, rusty-jointed medico, was a constant, and it was hinted, not unwelcome visitor at Polly's father's house—by the way, I forgot to mention that the O'Connor, *père*, was the master of a Charter-house school in the town, and as very a character as such individuals almost invariably are. He had originally been a soldier, so rough, unpolished, and uncouth, that it was a serious question in the neighborhood, if pretty Polly could by any possibility be an offshoot from such a crabbed stock.

At the time of which I write, availability for the particular post assigned to favorites at court, was the last thing thought of, and the O'Connor having rendered some ques-

tionable service to the then government, either in making rebels or ensnaring them, he was rewarded with the position he occupied, although he did not possess a single requisite for that responsible situation.

Ignorant of the first principles of education, he delegated his task to subordinates, whose capacity he was incompetent to judge of. His military antecedents made him a harsh, unbending disciplinarian, and as it was in a routine of which he knew nothing whatever, he felt it incumbent upon him to make up in severity and bluster for his lack of knowledge.

But to return to Polly. When the certainty of her prodigious perfidy reached me, I imagined myself a kind of master of Ravenswood, and took to melancholy and light food for some days. Reflection and strong physic, however, soon restored me to something like equanimity, and, becoming a little better reconciled to the annoyance of life, I rushed for consolation and revenge to the poet's corner of the Tipperary Gazette. It was then and there that I produced the following solemn warning to Polly O'Connor, and all others of her sex, who, when love and a full purse are weighed together, get into the scale on the lucre side, making poor, shivering Cupid "kick the beam." It was near the 14th of February, so, in the savage expectation of crushing her heart beneath the satirical avalanche, I designated my contribution—

A VALENTINE

FOR HER WHO WILL UNDERSTAND IT.

As Plutus one day, in his chariot of gold,
Was languidly taking the air,
Looking, spite of his riches, distressingly old,
Although dressed with remarkable care;
He met with young Cupid, who, stayed in his flight
By the wealthy god's dazzling array,
Hovered joyously round on his pinions of light,
Highly pleased with the tempting display.
"Ride with me," said Plutus, "all this you may share;
Ride with me, and garments of gold you may wear."

Quite delighted, the urchin stepped into the car,
Little deeming the roads were so rough;
But, repenting his rashness, before he went far
He cried, "Stop! I've been jolted enough.
Pray excuse me, friend Plutus, though rich be the prize
You obligingly offer to me,
Your realm is the gloomy earth, mine the bright skies,
'Tis not likely that we should agree.
Farewell," said the boy, as he mounted in air,
"The heart that Gold worships, Love never can share."

Having boldly appended my own initials to this scarifying outburst, I waited patiently to watch its effect upon the false one. In a few days I saw her—she looked sad. Ha! she is touched, thought I; and, alas for the ferocity of human nature, I rejoiced in her apparent affliction. In a few moments, the sadness deepened on her brow; her lovely lashes became burdened with her pearly tears; resolution, revenge, injured feelings, all dissolved into nothing before the cruel shower. I'm not quite certain what im-

mediately followed. I believe I flung myself enthusiastically on the carpet, before the Tipperary Niobe—beseeching her to repose her sorrows in my sympathizing bosom. At all events, I succeeded in calming her agitation, and after a delicious interview, wherein she thrilled my soul to its centre by the avowal that, however appearances might convict her of vacillation, I was, ever had been, and ever should be, the sole lord of her affections.

In that moment of blinding delirium, of course, all that had hitherto occurred was blotted from my memory as thoroughly as a damp sponge obliterates the records on a tablet of ass-skin. With the unreserved confidence of a relieved heart, she rested her cheek in dangerous proximity to my eager lips, but I had not sufficient courage to take advantage of the position. Her wonderful eyes looked sincerity and love even into the very depths of my soul. I was fascinated—bewildered—doubled up and done for, most effectually. "The evenings were now beautiful," she hinted, together with remote allusions to "soft twilight's balmy hour," setting suns, and such like delectations, until I actually summoned up courage sufficient to make an appointment to meet her

"By moonlight alone."

Nor had she any reserve while naming the particular grove where our trysting was to take place.

It was with the proud port of a conqueror that I deigned to tread the vulgar pavement after my never-to-be-forgotten interview with the Circean Polly; victory swelled

within my expanding chest, like too much soup. Polly was mine; what a triumph I had achieved. I do verily believe, if, at this juncture, it were at all essential, or even could be remotely conducive to Polly's tranquillity, that I should go through the then popular amusement of hanging, I would have gone to the halter with nearly as much cheerfulness as though it were the altar; but, fortunately, I was not called upon to testify the loyalty of my devotion by asphyxiation.

Rory and I met as usual that afternoon, and I remarked that a sort of ill-concealed joy was working like an undercurrent through his features—now he would sing vociferously; anon, suddenly subside into quiet—it was very curious—I determined, however, to discover, if possible, the cause of his self-satisfaction.

"Rory," said I.

"Hallo!"

"What makes you so silent?"

"Am I silent?" he replied, bursting instantly into a merry song.

"There's something on your mind, at all events; that I know."

"May-be there is; but do you know that's exactly what I was going to say to you?"

"Is it possible?" I rejoined, as demurely as I could, but my stinging cheek betrayed me.

"Why, how you blush," he went on. "Ha! have I found you out?"

"What do you mean?" said I, in an instant changed from convict to criminal.

"You have a sweetheart."

"And so have you," I retorted, as severely as I could.

"I don't deny it," said he, laughing like mad.

"Neither do I, if it comes to that."

Now, be it understood, we had neither of us, as yet, confessed to the other the reality of the attachment we had each conceived for the divine Polly.

"You are really in love, then, Rory?"

"Oh! don't mention it," replied he. "Ocean deep, my boy; fathomless; out of soundings one instant; the next, floating nautilus-like upon the warm, tranquil bosom of an oriental lake; now, lifted upon the very top wave of lunacy, to clutch at stars; and sunk in the hollow depths of dark despair." Rory was curiously ornate in his amatory outbreaks. "What do you think?" he went on, with a dash of his hitherto confidence. "I have been at the Heliconian again.

"No!"

"Upon my life! deep draughts! inspiration. Her eyes—oh! such eyes. You've seen them; small heavens, with a sun in each; saw her to day—all fixed, my boy; she loves me—said so, and yet my pulse didn't overflow and choke me; heart in my mouth, to be sure—but gulped it down again with a ponderous effort; going to meet her to-night, by appointment; what do you think of that, my boy? what do you think of that?"

Curious coincidence, thought I, but said nothing.

"Shall I read you what I have been doing?" said Rory, with a slightly apologetic gesture.

"Only too happy, of course," said I, mentally anathe-

matizing him for an injudicious bore, thus to parade his flaming productions before—ahem! a writer for the press; but here is Rory's effusion; he gave me a copy.

"You must know," he premised, "that I had some misgivings about a certain elderly codger, whom I frequently discovered in tantalizing companionship with my beloved; hence my Valentine is a little suggestive."

More curious coincidences, said something within me, striking upon the ear of my heart rather alarmingly; but the great pacificator, conceit, soon quelled the emotion, and I was all absorbed in self love and delicious anticipations, when Rory cleared his throat, and read

AN ALLEGORY.

As Cupid one day, with his quiver well stored,
Fluttered round, upon wickedness bent,
Right and left, his insidious love-messengers poured,
And hearts by the hundred were shamefully scored,
To the mischievous archer's content.
'Till at last he encountered King Death on his way,
Whose arrows more fatally flew.
In vain did the emulous urchin display
All his arts, his companion still carried the day,
For his shafts were, as destiny, true.

Boy Cupid, annoyed at the other's success,
Invoked cousin Mercury's aid,
Who, having for mischief a talent no less,
Changed their quivers, so featly that neither could guess,
Such complete transposition were made.
The result, up to this very hour you may see,
For when very old folk feel love's smart,
Cupid's arrow by Death surely missioned must be;
But when youth in its loveliness sinks to decay,
Death's quiver doth furnish the dart.

Here was a startling resemblance, with a vengeance; in spite of my new-fledged confidence, and the unmistakably excellent opinion I entertained of number one, I began to feel somewhat nervous.

"How do you like it?" said Rory, evidently nettled at my inattention.

"I don't like it all."

"Eh!"

"I don't mean that; I mean—the poetry is superb—lovely—but"—

"But what? you are laboring to give vent to something, evidently—out with it, man," Rory continued, moodily.

"Well, then, since you press me," said I, "I certainly have my misgivings."

"And what about, pray?"

"May I venture to ask who the elderly person is, at whom your allegory is directed?"

"I have no objection at all," Rory replied, "if you give me your word you won't mention it again."

"Honor bright."

"Well, then, it's old Tom Gallagher, the saw-bones."

Oh! my internal machinery ceased working, for an instant; had I a girl's privilege, I should have fainted outright; it was a shock; a stunning one, and no mistake.

"What's the matter with you?" inquired Rory, seeing me gasp like a fresh-caught perch.

"Oh! Rory," I cried, grasping his hand with the sudden affection that similarity of misfortune always instigates.

"Rory, my friend, did you see my Valentine in the *Tipperary Gazette?*"

"Yes, and liked it," said he, in a tone of sincerity; "but who was Plutus?"

"By all that's excruciating, old Tom Gallagher."

Rory turned as pale as a turnip.

"And the confounded little coquette who bamboozled you to day," I continued, courageously, despite of Rory's dark frown, "and who conglomerated my reasoning faculties in the same way, was Miss Polly O'Connor."

It was now Rory's turn to have his mechanism bothered.

"What do you mean?" he whispered, tremblingly.

"I mean," said I, "that this very morning, Miss Polly O'Conner swore as binding an oath as ever flashed out of a pair of eyes, or was sealed upon a pair of lips, that I was to have the fee simple of her heart for life, and to settle the affair, we are to meet this evening, at eight o'clock, in Duffy's borieen, at the little stile leading into Murphy's lane."

"Just the spot, and just the time, by Jove, that I was to be there for the same purpose," cried Rory, gnashing his teeth in a biting rage.

For a few moments, we stood silently regarding each other, and at last, broke into a violent fit of laughter; it was what old Tom himself, confound his coppery heart, would call "the crisis;" we were cured—not immediately, however—the dangerous point was passed—time and low diet did the rest.

The inhuman little savage confessed, shortly after, that

she had adopted that nefarious plan, in order that, by meeting together, we might—how, she didn't care—come to some explanation with regard to the duality of our attachment, and the double duplicity of our Tipperary Venus.

And now to return—it's a long way back, but never mind. I'm riding an old hack; few that's used to such journeys. To my first intention; that is, to illustrate the position in Fairydom of the *Leprechaun*.

It is one Rory's wild tales, and, as it mightily interested me—to be sure, I was young at the time—I trust, gentle reader, it may not prove entirely devoid of attraction for you.

In the little village of Templeneiry, situated at the base of one of the Galtee mountains, whose summit looks down upon the diminutive hamlet from the altitude of two thousand feet, there dwelt a very celebrated and greatly-sought-after individual, one Terry Magra, the Piper; there wasn't a *pathern*, fair, wake, wedding, or merriment of any description, for miles round, in which he and his dhrones were not called into requisition: there wasn't a performer on that noisy, but much-loved instrument, that could at all compare with Terry; it was solemnly asserted, indeed, that his superiority was the result of fairy agency; a belief which he was not unwilling to foster and encourage, inasmuch, as it gave him a wonderful importance among the superstitious peasantry.

Now, with grief it must be recorded, Terry was too much addicted to the almost national failing, that of

intoxication. Whisky was to him the universal panacea; did his sweetheart, and he had plenty of them, frown upon his tender suit, whisky banished the mortification; was his rent in arrear, and no sign of anything turning up, whisky wiped off the account, instanter; did all the ill-omened birds that flock around the head of poverty, assail him, he fired a stiff tumbler of whisky punch at them, and they dispersed.

On the whole, it was a jolly vagabond, reckless, and variegated life, that of Terry Magra; his supernatural reputation, together with the general belief in the positive existence of fairies, entertained by the community in which he exercised his pleasant vocation, rendering him a fit subject to receive any spiritual impression, howsoever removed from the common course of events.

It was one moonlight night that Terry, after having attended a grand festival in the neighborhood, brought up, as was his usual custom, at a Sheebieen house, where a few seasoned old casks, like himself, invariably "topped off" with a round of throat-raspers; here he was the Sir Oracle; the lord of the soil himself—did they ever see him, which was not at all probable, for, upon the means wrung by his agents from the poor wretches, by Providence delegated to his care—those same agents, by the way, managing to squeeze out a comfortable per-centage for themselves—he lives in London. The lord of the soil, as I said, could not be served with readier obedience, or listened to with more profound attention.

The roaring song, and joke, and fun abounded upon this

occasion, and Terry improvised so wild and inspiriting a strain upon his famous pipes, that it was generally conceded, with enthusiasm tinctured with awe, that no mortal hand could have produced such astounding music.

At length, the sleepy proprietor of the place put a sudden end to the jollification, by stopping the supplies, the only way in which the Widow Brady—for I'm sorry to say it was a woman, and a decent-looking one too, who presided over this Pandora's box, where Hope forever lies imprisoned—could break up the party.

Terry, after vainly endeavoring to mollify the widow, gathered up his magic pipes, and sallied forth. Adieus were exchanged; friendly hugs, and protestations of eternal friendship passed between the stammering, roaring crowd, to be ratified hereafter, it might be, by a crack on the skull from a tough *alpieen*. At last they separated, each to find, as he could, his way home by the devious light of a clouded moon.

Now, Terry lived a smart way up the mountain, and so, with, as he said, "the sense fairly bilin' in him everywhere but his murdherin' legs," that persisted in carrying him in the opposite direction to that which his intention pointed, the contest between his will and his locomotive powers making his course somewhat irregular—our bold piper proceeded on his way, humming snatches of songs, and every now and then, by way of diversion, waking the echoes by a fierce blast from his "chanter."

Whether Terry resorted to these means for the purpose of keeping his courage from slumbering within his breast,

I know not; but, inasmuch as the ground he was traversing had a general fairy repute, I think it more than likely that, notwithstanding the whisky-valor with which he had armed himself, it was not without considerable trepidation he endeavored to make his way through the enchanted precincts.

There was one isolated mound, which tradition had positively marked as a favorite resort of the "good people," and as Terry neared it, apprehension smote against his heart lustily. For the first time, he faltered. The moon, which had hitherto seemed to light him famously, shot suddenly behind a dense, black cloud, and Terry thought that blindness had fallen upon him, so black did everything appear. At the same moment, a gust of wind shook the crisp leaves of the aspen trees, with a noise like the rattling of dry bones, that sunk into his very soul. He was frightened—he couldn't go a step further. Down on his knees he fell, in the middle of the road, and, as a last resource, tried to collect himself sufficiently to mutter through the form of exorcisement used by the peasantry in similar emergencies. To his horror he discovered that he couldn't remember a syllable of the matter. He resorted to his prayers, but his traitor-memory deserted him there also.

Now his perturbation and dismay increased, for he knew by those signs that he was "fairy-struck." There was nothing left him but to run for it; but, to his yet greater terror, on endeavoring to rise from his knees, he found himself rooted to the ground like a tree; not a muscle could he move. Then—as he described it—

"The fairy bells rung like mad inside of me skull. The very brains of me was twisted about, as a washerwoman twists a wet rag; somethin' hit me a bat on the head, an' down I dropped, as dead as a herrin'."

When Terry came to himself again, the darkness had vanished, and the whole scene was glowing with the mellow softness of an eastern morning. The atmosphere was imbued with a delicious warmth, while a subdued crimson haze hung between earth and sky. The common road-stones looked like lumps of heated amber. The very dew-drops on the grass glittered like rubies, while the noisy little mountain-fall, where it broke white against the rocks, flashed and sparkled in the rosy light, like jets of liquid gold, filling the air with living gems.

"Be jabers, an' this is Fairy-land, sure enough," said Terry; "an' if the little blaggards has got anything agin' me, it's in a murdherin' bad box I am, the divil a doubt of it. I've nothin' for it, anyway, but to take it aisy." So he sat upon a large stone on the wayside, and gazed with intense admiration on the lovely scene before him, inly wondering what kind of demonstration the inhabitants of this enchanted spot would make when they discerned his audacious intrusion.

Several minutes had elapsed, and Terry heard nothing but a small, musical hum, barely discernible by the sense, which every warm current of air caused to rise and fall upon his charmed ear, in undulations of dreamy melody. Suddenly, however, his attention was directed towards a fallen leaf, which some vagrant breeze appeared to toss to

and fro in merry play. For a long time he watched its eccentric movements, until at last a gust of wind lifted it up, and whirling it round and round in circling eddies, dropped it on the piece of rock where he was sitting.

Now Terry perceived a multitude of tiny creatures, ant-like, busied around the still fluttering leaf, and on stooping to examine them closely, his heart leaped like a living thing within his bosom, his breath came short and gasping, and his tongue clove to his palate.

"There they are, an' no mistake," thought he; "an' my time is come. May the blessed saints stand betune me an harm."

The crowds of atomies which he had supposed to be ants, were beings of the most exquisite human form; anon, the air grew thick with them. Some, winged like butterflies, disported around his head, and alighted upon his garments, pluming their bejewelled pinions and then darting off again.

"It's mighty quare that they don't give me a hint that I'm out of me element," thought Terry, as, emboldened by their passiveness, he gently took the leaf up in his hand, on which were dozens of them yet clustered; he held the fairy-laden leaf up to his eyes; still they kept gambolling about it; they overrun his fingers, and clambered up his sleeve, but no intimation did they give that Terry was of other material than one of the rocks by which they were surrounded; they invaded his face, examined his mouth, and peered into his eyes, yet there was no indication that his presence was acknowledged.

Resolving to test the matter at once, with an effort of courage, he rose up gradually, and looked around him; all was quiet.

"If any thing will make them spake, the pipes will," said he, bravely, and so, filling his chanter, he gave one preliminary blast, and finding that it met with no response, save from the distant echoes, that sent it sweeping back in multiplied reverberations, he commenced to play one of his most lauded planxtys; never had he satisfied himself better, but never had he exerted himself before a more unappreciative assembly; the universal fun and frolic went on as before.

His artistic self-love was sadly wounded. "The divil such a lot of stupid fairies did I ever hear tell of," said he, throwing down his pipes in disgust. "An' bad luck attend the grunt more yez'll get out o' me; such elegant music as I've been threaten yez wid, an' the never an ear cocked among the lot of yez."

"A thin, Misther Terry Magra," said the smallest possible kind of a voice, but which thrilled through the piper as though it were thunder-loud. "Shure, an' you're not goin' to concate that it's music you've been tearin' out ov them tree-stumps of yours; be the powers of war, it's a tom-cat I thought you wor squeezin' undher yer arms."

"Thank you, kindly, yer honor, for the compliment, whoever you are," replied Terry, when, on turning round to the quarter from whence the voice proceeded, he saw, sitting on the branch of a tree beside him, a diminutive piper, in all respects a perfect resemblance to himself;

dressed in similar garments, even to the dilapidated *caubieen*, with an atom of a *dhudieen* stuck in it; but what elicited his admiration most of all, was the weeny set of pipes the swaggering little ruffian carried on his arm.

"Your soul to glory," cried Terry, his excitement completely mastering his apprehension. "An' if you can blow any music out of them, I'll give in soon an' sudden."

"Howld yer prate, you ugly man, an' bad Christian," cried the little fellow; "sure, an' it's plinty of help I'll have;" with that, he'll put the bellows under his arm, and blew a blast that sounded like the whistle of a tom-tit in distress; a signal which was quickly answered by similar sounds, issuing from all directions; and very soon Terry saw groups of little pipers climbing up the tree until the branch was fairly alive with them, each one an exact counterpart of the first.

"May I never sin if the sowls of all the Terry Magras, past, present, an' to come, ain't to the fore, it's my belief, this minnit," said the piper, in an ecstasy of amazement.

"We must graize our elbows before we begin, boys," said Terry's friend, producing a fairy bottle.

"Here's your health, Misther Terry Magra," says the little vagabond, with a ghost of a laugh; and up went the bottle to his head.

"Here's your health, Misther Terry Magra," they all repeated, as the real mountain dew went merrily round.

"Faix, an' it's glad enough I'd be to return thanks for the favor," said Terry, "if it's a thing that I had a toothful

of sperrits to join yez in; more, betoken, I'm as drouthy as a sand-bag this blessed hour."

"Never be it said that a dhry Christian should keep cotton in his mouth, while we can give him a dhrop to wash it out," said the little piper, throwing his bottle at Terry.

"Bedad, it's a *dhrop*, sure enough, that I'll be suckin' out of this," said Terry, as he regarded the tiny atom that rested in the palm of his hand. "Bad 'cess to me, if a scooped-out duck-shot wouldn't howld more nourishment. I'm obleeged to you for your good intentions, any way, but I b'leeve I won't be robbin' you this time."

"Don't be refusin' your liquor, you fool," said the piping little chap, with a wicked look out of his mites of eyes. "I'll be bound that such liquor never tickled your throat before."

"Well, rather than appear onfriendly, I'll just go through the motions; so here's jolly good luck to yez all," said Terry, raising the pellet-like material to his lips, when, to his intense satisfaction and wonder, his mouth instantly filled up, and run over, with a perfect flood of such whisky as he owned never yet had blessed his palate; again and again he repeated the experiment, and with the like delicious result.

"Hollo! there, give me back my bottle, you thief of the world; would you ruin us, entirely?" cried the little piper. "If the blaggard wouldn't drink the say dhry, I'm not here."

"By the sowl of me mother," said Terry, with a loud

smack of enjoyment, "if the say was made of such stuff as that, may I never, if I wouldn't change places wid a mermaid's husband, and flourish a fish's tail all the days of my life."

"But this has nothin' to do concarnin' the music," says the fairy, "so, here goes to show you how much you know about humorin' the pipes." So saying, the whole army of pipers set up a chant, so small, and yet so exquisitely sweet and harmonious, that Terry scarcely dared to breathe, for fear of losing the slightest echo of such bewitching strains.

"What do you say to that?" inquired the little fellow, when they had finished.

"Say to it," cried Terry, flinging his hat upon the ground in an ecstasy of delight; "what the mischief can I say? Bedad, there never was a mortial had the concate so completely licked out o' him as it's been deludhed out o' me at this present writin, an' to make my words good, av there was a bit of fire near, if I wouldn't make cindhers of that murdherin' ould catherwauler ov mine, I'm a grasshopper."

"It does you credit to own up to it so readily, Terry Magra," said the head fairy, pleased enough at the compliment. "An', by the way of rewardin' you for that same, we'll give you a blast of another sort." With that they turned to and executed a jig-tune, so swiftly-fingered, so lively and irresistibly *sole*-inspiring, that, with a wild scream of delight, Terry whipped off his great coat, and jumping on the level rock, went through the varied complications of the most intricate description of Irish dance.

"Murdher alive, av I only had a partner now," he cried.

"Such elegant music, an' only one to be enjoyin' it." Faster and faster played the fairy pipers, and yet more madly Terry beat time upon the stone, making the mountains resound to his vociferous shouts, until exhausted at last, he jumped off, and sunk panting on the ground.

"Oh! *tear an' aigers!*" he cried, "an' av yez have a grain of compassion in thim insignificant tiniments of yours, fairies, darlin', won't yez lend us the loan of a pull out of that same bit of a bottle, for it's the seven senses that you've fairly batthered out o' me wid that rattlin' leg-teazer of a chune."

"Wid a heart an' a half, my hayro!" said the little piper, flinging Terry the fairy-bottle; "it's you that has the parliaminthary unction for the creather, if ever a sowl had. Don't be afeard of it, it won't hurt a feather of you, no more nor wather on a duck's back."

Thus encouraged, Terry lifted his elbow considerably, before he thought it prudent to desist, the fairy liquor appearing more delicious with each gulp, when, all at once—for Terry had a tolerable share of acuteness for a piper—the thought struck him that the little schemers might have a motive in thus plying him with such potential stuff.

"If you're at all inclined for a nap, Terry, my boy," said the fairy, blandly, "there's a lovely bank of moss fornent you, that'll beat the best feather-bed at the Globe Inn, in the town of Clonmel. Stretch yourself on it, *aroon*, an' we'll keep watch over you as tindherly as av your own mother was hangin' over yer cradle."

"Ho! ho! is it there yez are, you sootherin' vagabonds,"

said Terry to himself. "It's off o' my guard you want to ketch me, eh?" He was determined, however, to diplomatize, so he replied, with equal politeness, "It's thankful that I am to yer honors for the invite, but I wouldn't be makin' such a hole in my manners as to let a wink come on me in such iligant company."

"Oh, well, just as you like, Terry Magra," observed the fairy, with just enough of lemon in his tone to convince Terry that his surmise was correct. "At all events, if you're not sleepy now, you soon will be," the little fellow continued, "so, when you are, you will lie down without fear. In the meantime, we must go and inform our king how famously we've amused you, and what a fine fellow you are." So saying, with a sharp little squeal of a laugh, that Terry thought carried with it a sufficiency of sarcasm, the little piper and his companions rapidly descended from their perch, and vanished from his sight.

No sooner had they departed when Terry's ears were saluted by a singularly delightful buzzing noise, that, in spite of his endeavor to resist it, caused a growing drowsiness to steal over him. The declining daylight deepened into a still more roseate hue. Once or twice his eyelids drooped, but he recovered himself with a vigorous effort.

"By the ghost of Moll Kelly," he cried, "I'm a lost mutton, as sure as eggs is chickens, if the sleep masthers me; the pipes is my only chance." So saying, he shook off the slumberous sensation, and, seizing the instrument, blazed out into a stormy attack upon "Garryowen," and, sure enough, something like a distant groan, as of disap-

pointment, reached him at the very first snore of the chanter.

"Ha! ha!" he exclaimed, "it isn't an omadhaun all out yez has to dale wid this time, you little rascals, as cunnin' as ye think yerselves. Bedad, it won't do me any harm to make use of my eyes hereabouts; who knows but I may light atop of a fairy threasure, and drive the imptiness out of my pocket for ever and ever."

With this determination, the bold piper proceeded to investigate the character of the ground in his immediate neighborhood. For a short time he saw nothing remarkable except the circumstance of the whole surroundings being alive with fairies, to whose presence he was becoming more and more habituated; occasionally he would pause in his search to view with admiration the energetic way in which a group of workers attended to their specific duties. Observing at one time a more than usual commotion, he was led to give the affair particular scrutiny, when he discovered that it was the scene of a most animated contest between two distinct bodies of supernaturals.

An infant lily-of-the-valley was just raising its head above the yielding earth, softened and broken to assist its upward progress, by scores of busy atomies. Numbers showered its tender leaf with refreshing dew—procured, as Terry observed, by plunging into the hollow cup of some sturdy neighboring flower, then flying back to their charge, and shaking the nutritious drops from their wings—others, with mechanical ingenuity, held glasses by which they could concentrate the passing sunbeams upon the spot,

when necessary; while others drove there with their united pinions the stray breezes, whose invigorating breath was needed.

While Terry was rapt in the delightful contemplation of this curious scene, all at once he saw that there was something of uncommon interest going on amongst the crowd. He observed, in the first instance, that although the labor was not for a moment suspended, yet a solid phalanx of armed fairies had formed about the immediate workers. The reason was soon obvious, for, careering round and round, or darting to and fro. in zigzag courses almost as swiftly as the lightning itself, was an enormous dragon-fly, carrying on its glistening back a diminutive form of a brilliant green color, that flashed in the glancing light like living emerald. Wherever there was a tender young plant there its fierce attack was directed, and in all cases repelled by the brave little guardians.

This terrible monster—as it appeared even in Terry's eyes, when compared with the tiny creatures that surrounded him—seemed to have singled out the fragile lily-of-the-valley for its especial ferocity, for again and again it darted furiously against the unyielding defenders, only, however, to be repulsed at each charge, writhing and twisting its snaky body, punctured by the thorn-bayonets of the fairy-guard.

The indomitable courage and resolution of the defence at length prevailed, and after a last ineffectual effort to break through the chevaux-de-frise that protected the beleaguered flower, the dreadful enemy wheeled angrily two

or three times around the spot, and at length darted upwards rapidly, and disappeared, to the manifest delight of the fairies. Soon, however, a yet more formidable danger threatened, for in the distance there approached a gigantic snail, dragging its noxious slime over every thing in its destructive path. Terry now observed evidences of the most intense solicitude and perturbation. The guard around the flower was trebled, scouts seemed to be called in from all quarters, hastening to a common rendezvous. Meantime the snail moved on in a direct line with the object of their care and anxiety.

"Now my fine fellows," said Terry, completely absorbed in the interesting scene, "how the mischief are yez goin' to manage that customer?"

Nearer and nearer crawled the snail, and at every onward movement the little crowd grew more agitated, scampering here and there, and overrunning each other in a perfect agony of apprehension and excitement, like a disturbed colony of ants. Multitudes of them cleared the small stumps of decayed grass, and rolled off the pebbles from a side path, in the hope of diverting Mr. Snail's course; but their engineering skill was fruitless—still on he came, crushing every delicate germ in his progress. He was now only about six inches away from the lily, and the trepidation of the fairies became so excessive, that it smote upon Terry's heart. He forgot for a moment or two that he himself was the arbiter of their fate.

"Mother o' Moses," said he; "it's afeared I am that yez goin' to get the worst of the fight, this time; heigh! at

him agin, yer sowls," he shouted, clapping his hands by way of encouragement, as a crowd would try to push the snail from the direct path.

"Where's yer sinse, you little blaggards? why don't yez all get together, and you'd soon tumble the murdherin' Turk over."

Despair seemed to be spreading through the fairy ranks, when it suddenly occurred to Terry that it was in his own power to put an end to their fears at once, by removing the cause; another, and more personal idea flashing across his mind at the same time.

"Why, then, bad 'cess to this thick skull o' mine," said he, as he picked up the snail and hurled it to a distance. "It well becomes me to be stickin' here, watchin' the antics of these little ragamuffins, instead of mindin' my own business of threasure-huntin';" so, without waiting to see what effect his timely interference had upon the supernals, he commenced vigorously to prosecute his search.

For some time he diligently explored the crevices and deep hollows on the mountain's side, without finding the slightest indication to stimulate his exertions; one particular opening, however, he was loathe to penetrate; the insects were so numerous therein, and flew so spitefully against his face, that, although it evidently extended to some distance into the heart of the mountain, again and again he was driven from his purpose of ascertaining that fact by the pertinacity of the annoying creatures; now, a prodigious horned beetle would bang sharply against his cheek; anon, he would be entirely surrounded by a

cloud of wasps, through which he had to fight his way lustily.

Thrice had he entered the cavity, and having been ignominiously driven back each time, had determined to give up the effort to penetrate further. "Faix, an' it's mighty quare, entirely," said he, "that this is the only spot in the place that's so throubled with the varmint: it's my belief there's somethin' in that, too," he continued, a new light seeming to break upon him; "what should they be here for, more nor at any other openin', unless it was to keep strangers from inthrudin'? May I never, if I don't think that same hole in the rock is the turnpike-gate to somethin' surprizin' in the way of a fairy road; here goes to thry, anyway, in spite of the singin' and stingin'."

Once more, therefore, my bold Terry attempted to enter the cavern, and was attacked as before, but with tenfold fury; legions of stinging flies, wasps, and hornets, raised a horrible din about his ears; but, setting his resolution up to the fearless point, on he went, without regarding their unpleasant music; expecting, of course, to be stung desperately; what was his astonishment and relief to discover that the noise was the only thing by which he was at all distressed; not one of his myriad of assailants even as much as touched him, and before he had proceeded many steps further into the cavity, every sound had ceased.

He now found his onward progress most uncomfortably impeded by a stubborn species of wild hedge-briar, whose sharp, thorny branches interlaced through each other, forming a barrier, whose dangerous appearance was suffi-

cient to deter the boldest from risking a laceration. Not an opening large enough to admit his head, could Terry see, and he was about again to give the attempt up as unattainable, when, by the merest accident, on turning round, his foot slipped, and with that inward shudder with which one prepares for an inevitable hurt, he fell against the prickly wall; when, to his utter amazement, it divided on each side as though it were fashioned of smoke, and he tumbled through, somewhat roughly, to be sure, but altogether unharmed by the formidable-looking interposition.

"By the mortial of war," he cried, rubbing his dilapidated elbow, and looking round to examine his position, "I'm on the right side of that hedge, any way."

Now, Terry perceived that the barrier he had just so successfully passed was slowly regaining its original appearance, and, to his mortification, as it gradually closed up the aperture of the cavern, the light, hitherto quite sufficient for him distinctly to see every object, faded away slowly, and finally left him in utter darkness.

"Bedad, an' a tindher-box an' a sulphur match would be about the greatest threasure I could light on at this present," said Terry, as he groped about cautiously, to find some kind of an elevation whereupon he might sit and wait for luck.

He had not been many minutes, however, in the blackness, when his quickened sense became aware of a light, reddish spot, which faintly glowed at some distance. This was the first sign of an encouraging nature he had experi-

enced, and with a beating heart he proceeded to feel his way towards the bright indication.

Getting gradually accustomed to the dimness that surrounded him he suddenly discovered that he was opposed by a solid wall of rock, in the very centre of which the pale red glimmer still shone, like a star seen through a summer mist.

"The divil a use in my thravellin' any longer in that direction," said Terry, turning sharply round to retrace his steps, when to his amazement and consternation he encountered the same rocky barrier. Whichever way he looked all was alike, stern and impassable. He was enclosed within a stony wall, whose circumference was but little more than an arm's length, but whose height was lost in the unsearchable darkness.

"Musha, then, how the divil did I stumble into this man thrap?" cried Terry, in consternation. "There's no way out that I can see, an' where the mischief the top of it is, is beyant my comprehendin'. Bedad, there's nothing for it but to thry an' climb up." So saying, Terry placed his foot upon what he supposed, in the uncertain light, was a solid projection of the rock, when down he stepped through it, and before he could recover his perpendicular, his body was half buried in the apparent wall.

"Be jabers, if it ain't more of their thricks—the never a rock's there, no more nor the briars was; they may make fools of my eyes, but they can't of my fingers, an' its thim I'll thrust to in future," said he; and so, keeping the light in view, he boldly dashed through all the seeming obsta-

cles, and soon found himself once more in an open space. It was a kind of vaulted tunnel that he was now traversing, his onward path still in profound darkness, with the sole exception of the red light, which Terry imagined grew larger and more distinct, each step he took. A rush of warm air every now and then swept by him, and his tread echoed in the far distance, giving an idea of immense length.

Somewhat assured by the impunity with which he had already explored the enchanted districts, he was beginning to pick his way with freer breath, when his ears were smitten by a sound which sank his heart still deeper. It was the loud and furious barking of a pack of evidently most ferocious dogs, which approached rapidly, right in his path. On came the savage animals, louder and louder grew their terrible bark, and Terry gave himself up for lost in good earnest. It was no use to turn about and run, although that was his first impulse; so, flinging himself down on the ground, he awaited the attack of his unseen foes. He could now hear the clatter of their enormous paws, while their growlings echoed through the cavern like thunder.

"Murdher an' nouns, there's a half a hundred of them, I know there is; an' it's mince-meat they'll make of me in less than no time," cried Terry, mumbling all the prayers he could remember, and in another instant, with a tremendous roar, they were upon him, and, with stunning yells, swept over him as he lay; but not an atom did he feel, no more than if a cloud had passed across.

"If they're not at it again, the blaggards," said he, get-

ting up, and shaking himself; "the divil a dog was there in the place at all—nothin' but mouth—but, by dad, there's enough of that to frighten the sowl out of a narvous Christian;" and once more the bold Piper started in pursuit of the coveted light. He had not proceeded very far, before he heard the distant bellowing of a bull; but, warned by his past experience, he shut his ears against the sound, and although it increased fearfully, as though some mad herd were tearing down upon him, he courageously kept on. To be sure, his breath stopped for a moment, and his pulse ceased to beat, when the thing seemed to approach his vicinity, but, as he anticipated, the terror fled by him as he stood up erect, with the sensation, only, of a passing breeze.

Terry received no further molestation, but plodded along quietly until he came right up to the place from whence the light proceeded which had hitherto guided him, and here a most gorgeous sight presented itself to his enraptured gaze.

Within a luminous opening of the cave he saw groups of living atomies, all busied in the formation of the various gems for which the rich ones of the world hunger. In one compartment were the diamond-makers; in another, those who, when finished, coated them over with the rough exterior which they hoped would prevent them from being distinguished from common pebbles. Here was a tiny multitude, fashioning emeralds of astonishing magnitude; there, a crowd of industrious elves, putting the last sparkle into some magnificent rubies.

With staring eyes, and mouth all agape with wonder and delight, Terry watched the curious process for a few moments, scarcely breathing audibly for fear of breaking the brilliant spell. What to do he did not know. Heaps of the coveted jewels lay around within his very grasp, yet how to possess himself, without danger, of a few handfuls, he couldn't imagine.

At last, resolving to make one final effort to enrich himself, he suddenly plunged his hand into the glittering mass of diamonds, presuming they were the most valuable, and, clutching a quantity, thrust them into his pocket, intending to repeat the operation until he had sufficient; but the instant that he did so, the entire cavern was rent asunder as with the force of an earthquake, the solid rock opened beneath him with a deafening explosion, and he was shot upwards as from the mouth of a cannon—up—up through the rifted cave, and miles high into the air. Not a whit injured did he feel from the concussion, saving a sense of lightness, as though he was as empty as a blown bladder. So high did he go in his aerial flight, that he plainly saw to-morrow's sun lighting up the lakes and fields of other latitudes. As soon as he had reached an altitude commensurate with the power of the explosive agency, he turned over and commenced his downward progress, and, to his great relief, found that his fall was by no means as rapid as he had anticipated—for his consciousness had not for a moment left him; on the contrary, the buoyant air supported him without difficulty, and each random gust of wind tossed him about like a feather. Well, day came,

and shone, and vanished; so did the evening, and the starry night, and early morning, before Terry had completed his easy descent; when at length he touched the earth, gently as a falling leaf, and found himself lying beside the very stone from whence he had departed on his late exploration. The marks of the recent terrible convulsion were visible, however, for the vast mountain was gone, and in its place a deep, round chasm, filled to overflowing with a dark yellow liquid, that hissed and bubbled into flame like a Tartarian lake. The rocks around him, that before had shone so resplendently, were now blackened and calcined—the lovely vegetation blasted—the paradise a desert.

"Athin, may-be, I haven't been kickin' up the divil's delights hereabouts," said Terry, as he looked round at the desolation. "But never a hair I care; haven't I got a pocket-full of big di'minds, an' won't they set me up anyway?" he continued, drawing forth the precious contents of his pocket, and placing them on the rock by his side; when, to his infinite mortification, the entire collection turned out to be nothing but worthless pebbles.

"Musha! thin, may bad luck attend yez for a set of schemin' vagabones; an' afther all my throuble it's done again I am," he cried, in a rage, emptying his pocket, and flinging away its contents in thorough disgust. "Hollo! what's this?" he cried, with a start, as he drew forth the last handful; "may I never ate bread if I haven't tuk one of the chaps prisoner, an' if it isn't a Leprechaun I'm not alive;" and sure enough there, lying in the palm of his

hand, was as queer a looking specimen of fairyhood as ever the eye looked upon.

The little bit of a creature had the appearance of an old man, with wrinkled skin and withered features. It was dressed, too, in the costume of a by-gone age. A mite of a velvet coat covered its morsel of a back; a pair of velvet breeches, together with white silk stockings, and little red-heeled shoes, adorned its diminutive legs, which looked as if they might have belonged to a rather fat spider, and a stiff white wig, duly pomatumed and powdered, surmounted by a three-cornered hat, bedecked its head.

The leprechaun seemed to be in a state of insensibility, as Terry examined minutely its old-fashioned appearance. 'It's just as I've heard tell of 'em," he cried, in glee; "cocked hat, an' breeches, an' buckles, an' all. Hurroo! I'm a made man if he ever comes to." With that, Terry breathed gently on the little fellow as he lay in his hand, as one would to resuscitate a drowned fly.

"I wondher if he'd have any relish for wather—here goes to thry," said Terry, plucking a buttercup flower, in whose cavity a drop of dew had rested, and holding it to the lips of the leprechaun, "Oh, murdher! if I only had a taste of whisky to qualify it; if that wouldn't bring the life into an Irish fairy, nothing would Ha! he's openin' his bit of an eye, by dad; here, suck this, yer sowl to glory," Terry continued, and was soon gratified by seeing the leprechaun begin to imbibe the contents of the buttercup with intense avidity.

"I hope you're betther, sir," said Terry, politely.

"Not the betther for you, Mr. Terry Magra," replied the fairy, "though I'm obleeged to you for the drop o' drink."

"Indeed, an' yer welcome, sir," Terry went on, "an' more betoken, it's mighty sorry I am to have gev you any oneasiness."

"That's the last lie you towld, Mr. Terry, and you know it," the leprechaun answered, tartly, "when your heart is fairly leapin' in your body because you've had the luck to lay a howld of me."

"Well, an' can't a fella be glád at his own luck, an' yet sorry if anybody else is hurted by it," said Terry, apologetically.

"You can't humbug me, you covetious blaggard," the fairy went on. "But I'll thry you, anyway—now listen to me. The fairies that you have just been so wicked as to inthrude your unwelcome presence upon, were all leprechauns like myself—immortal essences, whose duty it was to make and guard the treasures, that you saw in spite of all the terrors that we employed to frighten you away. So long as they were unobserved by mortal eyes, our existence was a bright and glorious one; but, once seen, we are obliged to abandon our fairy life and shape, take this degrading form, and work at a degrading occupation, subject to the ailments and mishaps of frail humanity, and forced to live in constant féar of your insatiate species. Now, the only chance I have to regain the blissful immortality I have lost, is for you to be magnanimous enough to relinquish the good fortune you anticipate from my capture. Set me unconditionally free, and I can revel once more in my for-

feited fairy existence—persevere in your ungenerous advantage, and I am condemned to wander a wretched outcast through the world—now, what is your determination?"

Terry's better feelings prompted him at first to let the little creature go, but love of lucre got the upper hand, and after a slight pause of irresolution, he replied:

"Indeed, an' it's heart sick that I am to act so conthrary, but I'll leave it to yerself if it ain't agin nature for a man to fling away his luck. Shoemakin' is an iligant amusement, an' profitable; you'll soon get mighty fond of it; so, I'm afeard I'll have to throuble you to do somethin' for me."

"I thought how it would be; you're all alike," said the fairy, sadly; "selfish to the heart's core. Well, what do you want? I'm in your power, and must fulfill your desire."

"Long life to you; now ye talk sense," cried Terry, elated. "Sure I won't be hard on you—a thrifle of money is all I wish for in the world, for everything else will follow that."

"More, perhaps, than you imagine—cares and anxieties," said the leprechaun.

"I'll risk all them," replied Terry; "come, now, I'll tell you what you may do for me. Let me find a shillin' in my pocket every time I put my fist into it, an' I'll be satisfied."

"Enough! it's a bargain; and now that you have made your wish, all your power over me is gone," said the leprechaun, springing out of his hand like a grasshopper, and

lighting on the branch beside him; "it's a purty sort of a fool you are," it continued, with a chuckle, "when the threasures of the universe were yours for the desire, to be contented with a pitiful pocket-full of shillin's! ho! ho!" and the little thing laughed like a cornkrake at the discomfited Terry.

"Musha! then, may bad cess to me if I don't crush the fun out of your cattherpillar of a carcass if I ketch a howlt of you," said Terry, savagely griping at the fairy; but, with another spring, it jumped into the brushwood, and disappeared.

Terry's first impulse was to dive his hand into his pocket to see if the leprechaun had kept his word, and to his great delight, there he found, sure enough, a fine bright new shilling. At this discovery his joy knew no bounds. He jumped and hallooed aloud, amusing himself flinging away shilling after shilling, merely on purpose to test the continuance of the supply. He was satisfied. It was inexhaustible, and bright dreams of a splendid future flitted before his excited imagination.

With a heart full of happiness, Terry now wended his way homeward, busying himself, as he went along, in conveying shilling after shilling from one pocket into the other, until he filled it up to the button-hole. On arriving at the village, he met a few of his old companions, but so altered that he could scarcely recognize them, while they stared at him as though he were a spectre.

"Keep us from harm," said one, "if here ain't Terry Magra come back."

"Back," cried Terry, with a merry laugh, "why, man alive, I've never been away."

"Never away, indeed, and the hair of you as white as the dhriven snow, that was as brown as a beetle's back, whin you left," said the other.

It then struck Terry that his friends in their turn had aged considerably. The youngest that he remembered had become bent and wrinkled. "The saints be good to us," he cried, "but this is mighty quare entirely. How long is it sence I've seen yez, boys?" he inquired eagerly.

"How long is it? why, a matther of twenty years or so," said one of the bystanders; "don't you know it is?"

"Faith, an' I didn't until this blessed minute," said Terry. "Have I grown ould onbeknownst to myself, I wondher?"

"Bedad, an' it's an easy time you must have had sence you've been away," said another; "not all as one as some of us."

"Well, won't you come an' taste a sup, for gra' we met?" said Terry, beginning to feel rather uneasy at the singular turn things had taken; but they shook their heads, and, without any other observation, passed on, leaving him standing alone.

"Stop!" he cried, "wait a bit; it's lashin's of money that I have—here—look;" and he drew forth a handful of the silver. It was no use, however. All their old cordiality and love of fun were gone; off they went, without even a glance behind them.

"Twenty years," said Terry to himself. "Oh, they're

makin' fun of me. I don't feel a bit oulder nor I was yestherday. I'll soon be easy on that point, anyway." So he proceeded towards the old drinking-place, that he had so often spent the night in, but not an atom of it could he find. In the place where he expected to see it, there was a bran new house. He entered it, however, and going straight up to a looking-glass which stood in the room, was amazed on seeing reflected therein an apparition he could not recognize, so withered and wrinkled did it appear, and so altogether unlike what he anticipated, that he turned sharply around in the hope of finding some aged individual looking over his shoulder; but he was entirely alone—it was his own reflection, and no mistake at all about it.

"By the powers of war, but my journey into the mountains hasn't improved my personal appearance," said he. "It's easy to see that; but, never mind, I've got the money, an' that'll comfort me;" and he jingled the shillings in his pocket as if he could never weary of the sound.

In a short time the fame of Terry's wealth spread abroad, and as it may readily be imagined, he didn't long want companions. The gay and the dissolute flocked round him, and as he had a welcome smile and a liberal hand for everybody, the hours flew by, carrying uproarious jollity on their wings, and notwithstanding his infirmities of body, Terry was as happy as the days were long.

Now, while he had only to provide for his own immediate wants, and settle the whisky scores of his riotous friends, he had easy work of it. It was only to keep putting his hand into his pocket two or three dozen times a

day, and there was more than sufficient. But this kind of existence soon began to grow monotonous, and Terry sighed for the more enviable pleasures of a domestic life, and inasmuch as it was now well understood that Terry was an "eligible party," he had no great difficulty in making a selection. Many of the "down hill" spinsters gave evident indications that they would be nothing loth to take him for better or for worse; and—I'm sorry to have to record the fact—not a few even of the more youthful maidens set their curls at the quondam piper. Neither his age, nor the doubtful source of his revenue, rendering him an unmarketable commodity in the shambles of Hymen.

In process of time, Terry wooed and won a demure-looking little *collieen*, and after having shut himself up for two or three days, accumulating money enough for the interesting and expensive ceremony, was duly bound to her for life. Now, it was that his inexhaustible pocket began to be overhauled continuously, and Terry cursed his imprudence in not asking for guineas instead of shillings. Mrs. Terry Magra possessed a somewhat ambitious desire to outvie her neighbors. Silk dresses were in demand and shawls and bonnets by the cart-load. The constant employment gave Terry the rheumatism in his muscles, until at last it was with the greatest difficulty he could force his hand into his pocket.

Before many months had elapsed, Terry was prostrated upon a sick bed, his side—the pocket-side—completely paralyzed, and as he was not one of those who lay by for a rainy day, his inability to apply to his fairy exchequer

caused him to suffer the greatest privation—and where were the boon companions of his joyous hours, now? Vanished—not one of them to be seen—but haply fluttering around some new favorite of fortune, to be in his turn fooled, flattered, and when the dark day came—deserted.

When Terry grew better in health, which he did very slowly, there was a considerable back-way to make up, and the best part of his time was occupied in the mere mechanical labor of bringing out his shillings. Mrs. Magra also became more and more exacting, and the care-worn piper began to acknowledge to himself that his good fortune was not at all comparable with the anxiety and annoyance it had produced. Again and again he deplored the chance which had placed the temptation in his way, and most especially blamed his own selfish greed, which prevented him from behaving with proper generosity toward the captured leprechaun.

"He towld me plain enough what would come of it," cried he, one day, as, utterly exhausted, he threw himself on the floor, after many hours' application to the indispensable pocket; "he towld me that it would bring care and misery, an' yet I wasn't satisfied to profit by the warning. Here am I, without a single hour of comfort, everybody dhraggin' at me for money, money! an' the very sinews of me fairly wore out wid divin' for it. This sort of life ain't worth livin' for."

Before long, Terry's necessities increased to such a degree, that out of the twenty-four hours of the day and night, more than two-thirds were taken up with the now

terrible drudgery by which they were to be supplied. No time had he left for relaxation—hardly for sleep. The thought of to-morrow's toil weighed on his heart, and kept him from rest. He was thoroughly miserable. It was in vain that he called upon death to put an end to him and his wretchedness together; there was no escape for him, even, by that dark road; the fear of a worse hereafter, made imminent by the consciousness of an ill-spent life, kept him from opening the eternal gate himself, to which he was often sorely tempted.

To this great despondency succeeded a course of reckless dissipation and drunkenness. Homeless at last, he wandered from one drinking-shop to another, caring nothing for the lamentable destitution in which his family was steeped; for, as is usually the case, the poorer he became the more his family increased. His deserted wife and starving little ones were forced to obtain a scanty subsistence through the degrading means of beggary. He himself never applied to his fairy resource unless to furnish sufficient of the scorching liquor as would completely drown all sense of circumstance. The slightest approach to sobriety only brought with it reflection, and reflection was madness. So, the very worst amongst the worst, in rags and filth, he staggered about the village, a mark of scorn and contempt to every passer-by, or else prone upon some congenial heap of garbage, slept off the fierceness of his intoxication, to be again renewed the instant consciousness returned.

With that extraordinary tenacity of life indicative of an

originally fine constitution, which, added to a naturally powerful frame of body, might have prolonged his years even beyond the allotted space, Terry crept on in this worse than brutal state of existence for many months, until at last, one morning, after a drinking bout of more than usual excess, he was found lying in a stable to which he had crawled for shelter, insensible, and seemingly dead. Perceiving, however, some slight signs of animation yet remaining, his discoverers carried him to the public hospital, for home he had none, and his own misdeeds had estranged the affections, and closed the heart against him of her whose inclination as well as duty would have brought her quickly to his side, had he but regarded and cherished the great God-gift to man—a woman's love, and not cast it aside as a worthless thing.

Tended and cared for, however, although by stranger hands, Terry hovered a long time betwixt life and death, until at length skill and attention triumphed over the assailant, and he was restored to comparative health.

It was then, during the long solitary hours of his convalescence, when the mind was restored to thorough consciousness, but the frame yet too weak for him to quit his bed, that the recollection of his wasted existence stood spectre-like before his mental vision. Home destroyed, wife and children abandoned, friendships sundered, and himself brought to the brink of a dreaded eternity, and all through the means he had so eagerly coveted, and by which he had expected to revel in all the world's joys.

He prayed, in the earnest sincerity of awakened repent-

ance; he prayed for Heaven's assistance to enable him to return to the straight path.

"Oh! if I once get out of this," he cried, while drops of agony bedewed his face, "I'll make amends during the brief time yet left me—I will, I will. Come what may, never again will I be beholdin' to that fearful gift. I now find to my great cost that wealth, not properly come by, is a curse and not a blessing. I'll work, with the help of the good God and his bright angels, an' may-be peace will once more visit my tortured heart."

It was some time before he was able to leave his bed, but when at last he was pronounced convalescent, he quitted the hospital, with the firm determination never again, under any circumstance whatsoever, even to place his hand within the pocket from whence he had hitherto drawn his resources. As a further security against the probability of temptation, he took a strong needle and thread, and sewed up the opening tightly.

"There," he cried, with an accent of relief, "bad luck to the toe of me can get in there now. Oh! how I wish to gracious it had always been so, and I wouldn't be the miserable, homeless, houseless, wife and childless vagabone that I am at this minnit."

As he was debating in his own mind what he should turn to in order to obtain a living—for so great a disgust had he taken to the pipes, to which he attributed all his wretchedness, that he had determined to give up his productive but precarious profession of piper, and abandoning the dissolute crowd who rejoiced in his performances, be-

take himself to some more useful and reputable employment—it suddenly occurred to him to visit the scene of his fairy adventure, in the hope that he might get rid of the dangerous gift his cupidity had obtained for him.

No sooner had he conceived the idea than he instantly set forward to put it in execution. The night was favorable for his purpose, and he arrived at the identical place in the mountain, without the slightest interruption or accident. He found it just as he had left it, a scene of the wildest desolation. No sound fell on his ear save the mournful shrieking of the wind as it tore itself against the harsh branches of the dead pine trees. He climbed the rugged side of the hill and looked into the black lake that filled the dark chasm at its summit. It seemed to be as solid as a sheet of lead. He flung a pebble into the gulf; it was eagerly sucked up, and sunk without a ripple, as though dropped into a mass of burning pitch. One heavy bubble swelled to the surface, broke into a sullen flame that flashed lazily for an instant, and then went out. A small, but intensely black puff of smoke rose above the spot; so dense was the diminutive cloud that it was rejected by the shadowy atmosphere, which refused to receive it within its bosom. Reluctantly it seemed to hang upon the surface of the lake, then slowly mounted, careering backwards and forwards with each passing breeze.

The singular phenomenon attracted Terry's attention, and he watched, with increasing interest, the gyrations of the cloud, until at length it took a steady direction towards the spot where he stood. It was not long before it floated

up to him, and he stepped aside to let it pass by, but as he moved, so did the ball of smoke. He stooped, and it followed his movement; he turned and ran—just as swiftly it sped with him. He now saw there was something supernatural in it, and his heart beat with apprehension.

"There's no use in kickin' agin fate," he said, "so, with a blessin', I'll just stop where I am, an' see what will come of it; worse off I can't be, an' that's a comfort any way."

So saying, Terry stood still, and patiently waited the result. To his great surprise the cloud of smoke, after making the circuit of his head two or three times, settled on his right shoulder, and on casting his eye round, he perceived that it had changed into a living form, but still as black as a coal.

"Bedad I'm among them agin, sure enough," said Terry, now much more easy in his mind; "I wondher who this little divil is that's roostin' so comfortably on my showldher."

"Wondher no longer, Misther Terry Magra," grunted a frog-like voice into his ear; "by what magic means, oh! presumptuous mortal, did you discover the charmed stone which compelled the spirit of yonder sulphurous lake to quit his warm quarters, thus to shiver in the uncongenial air? Of all the myriad pebbles that are scattered around, that was the only one which possessed the power to call me forth."

"Faix, an' it was a lucky chance that made me stumble on it, sir," said Terry.

"That's as it may turn out," replied the spirit. "Do

you know who and what I am? but why should you, ignorant creature as you are? Listen, and be enlightened. I am the chief guardian of yon bituminous prison, within whose murky depths lie groaning all of fairy kind, who have by their imprudence forfeited their brilliant station.

"You don't tell me that, sir? By goxty, an' I wouldn't like to change places with them," said Terry, with a great effort at familiarity.

"There's no knowing when you may share their fate," replied the spirit. "The soul of many an unhappy mortal, who has abused a fairy-gift, lies there, as well."

Terry shivered to his very marrow as he heard those words, for full well he knew, that amongst all such, none deserved punishment more than he; he was only wondering how his immortal part could be extracted from its living tenement, when, as though the spirit knew his very thoughts, it uttered:

"I have but to breathe within your ear a word of power, and with that word the current of your life would cease."

Terry instinctively stretched his neck to its fullest extent, as he said to himself, "I'll keep my lug out of your reach if I can, my boy." But the spirit either knew his thought or guessed it from the movement.

"Foolish piper," it said, "I could reach it did I so incline, were it as high as Cashel Tower." And to prove that the assertion was not a mere boast, the little fellow made a jump, and perched upon the bridge of Terry's nose, and sat there astride; and as it was of the *retroussé* order, a very comfortable seat it had; light as a feather, it

rested there, peering alternately into each of Terry's eyes, who squinted at the intruder, brimful of awe and amazement.

"I give in," said he. "It's less nor nothin' that I am in your hands; but if it's just as convainient for you, I'd be much obliged to you if you'd lave that, for its fairly tearin' the eyes out of me head that you are, while I'm thryin' to look straight at you."

"It's all the same to me entirely," replied the spirit; "and now that you have come to a full sense of my power, I'll take up my position at a more agreeable distance."

So saying, the spirit bounded off of Terry's nose, and alighted on a branch of the same tree on which the legion of little pipers had before assembled, while Terry wiped his relieved eyes with the sleeve of his coat, and sat upon the piece of rock that stood beside.

"And now, Masther Magra," said the spirit, "we'll proceed to business. Had you picked up any other stone but the one you did, or had you refrained from obstructing the lake in any way, your soul would have been mine for ever. You see what a small chance you had. But inasmuch as your good luck pointed out the talismanic pebble, you have yet the privilege of making another wish which I must gratify whatsoever it may be; think well, however, ere you ask it; let no scruples bound your desires. The wealth of the world is in my distribution."

Terry's nerves thrilled again, as his mind conjured up images of purchased delights. But for an instant only did he hesitate what course he should pursue.

"The temptation is wonderful," said he. "But no: I've endured enough of misery from what I've had already."

"What can I do for you?" said the spirit, sharply. "Don't keep a poor devil all night in the cold."

"Well, then, sir, I'll tell you," replied the other. "I suppose you know already—for you seem to be mighty knowledgeable—that some years back I kotch a leprechaun on this very spot; and though he towld me that it would be the desthroyin' of him out an' out, I meanly chose to make myself rich, as I thought, by taking a fairy-gift from him, rather than lettin' him go free an' unharmed. It was a dirty an' selfish thransaction on my part, an' it's with salt tears that I've repinted of that same. Now, if that leprechaun is sufferin' on my account, and you can give the creather any comfort, it's my wish that you'll manage it for me—ay, even though I was to bear his punishment myself."

"You have spoken well and wisely," said the spirit; "and your reward will be beyond your hope."

Simultaneously with those words, Terry was still more astonished at beholding a gradual but complete change taking place in the neighborhood: the blasted trees shot forth fresh branches, the branches, in their turn, pushed out new leaves, thick verdure overspread the rugged sides of the mountain; while gushing joyously from an adjacent hollow, a little rill danced merrily through the shining pebbles, singing its song of gratitude, as though exulting in the new-found liberty; unnumbered birds began to fill the air with their delicious melody, the rifted and calcined rocks

concealed their charred fronts beneath festoons of flowering parasites, the murky lake sank slowly into the abyss, while in its place a tufted, daisy-spangled field appeared, to which the meadow-lark descended lovingly, and fluttering a short space amidst the dewy grass, sprang up again, with loud, reverberating note.

The primeval change, when the beautiful new world emerged from chaos, was not more glorious than was the aspect now presented to the rapt beholder. He felt within himself the exhilarating effect of all this vast and unexpected wonder, the free, fresh blood cast off its sluggishness, and once more bounded through his veins, the flush of vigor and excitement bedewed his brow, the flaccid muscles hardened into renewed strength, elasticity and suppleness pervaded every limb, stiffened and racked erewhile with keen rheumatic pains; it was not, however, until attracted by the pure limpid stream that filtered into a sandy hollow near him, he stooped down to carry the refreshing draught up to his lips, that he was aware of the greatest change of all; for, instead of the sunken cheeks and wrinkled brow, the bloodshot eyes and thin, grey hairs that he had brought with him, the ruddy, health-embrowned and joy-lit features of years long gone, laughed up at him from the glassy surface.

And now a merry little chuckle tinkled in his ear, and on looking around, he discovered that the black spirit had vanished, and in its place sat the identical leprechaun, about whose melancholy fate he was so concerned.

"By the piper that played before Moses, but it's glad I

am to see you once more, my haro; have they let you out?" inquired Terry, with considerable anxiety.

"I have never been imprisoned," replied the little fellow, gaily.

"Why, then, *tear an nounthers*," said Terry. "You haven't been gostherin' me all the time, an' the heart of me fairly burstin' wid the thought of them weeshee gams of yours strikin' out among the pitch that was beyant."

"It was that very feeling of humanity, which I knew yet lingered in your heart, that saved you," replied the leprechaun.

"As how, sir, might I ax?"

"How long is it since you saw me before?"

"Don't mention it," cried Terry, with an abashed look, "a weary life-time a'most has passed since then."

"And *what* a life-time," observed the leprechaun, reproachfully.

"Indeed, an' you may say that," replied the other. "There's no one knows betther nor I do how sinfully that life was wasted, how useless it has been to me an' to every one else, how foolishly I flung away the means that might have comforted those who looked up to me, among heartless, conscienceless vagabones, who laughed at me while I fed their brutish appetites, and fled from me as though I were infectious when ill-health and poverty fell upon my head."

"Then the fairy gift did not bring you happiness?"

"Happiness!" replied Terry, with a groan, "it changed me from a man into a beast, it brought distress and misery

upon those nearest and dearest to me, it made my whole worldly existence one continued reproach, and God help me, I'm afeared it has shut the gates of heaven against my sowl hereafter."

"Then I suppose you have the grace to be sorry this time that you didn't behave more generously in my case," said the fairy.

"True darlin'; if I wasn't, I wouldn't be here now," replied Terry. "It was to thry and find you out that I took this journey, an' a sore one it is to a man wid the weight of years that's on my back."

"Oh, I forgot that you were such an ould creather intirely," said the little fellow, with a merry whistle, "but what the mischief makes you bend your back into an *apperciand*, and hide your ears on your showlders, as if the cowld was bitin' them."

"Faix, an' it's just because I'm afeered to sthraighten myself out, that murdherin thief rheumatism has screwed the muscles of my back so tight."

"You can't stand up then, eh Terry?"

"Not for this many a long day, sir, more is the pity," replied the other, with a heavy sigh.

"You don't tell me that," said the leprechaun, with a queer expression of sympathy. "There could be no harm thryin', any way."

"If I thought there would be any use in it, it's only too glad that I'd be," said Terry.

"There's no knowin' what a man can do, until he makes the effort."

Encouraged by these words, Terry commenced very gingerly to lift his head from its long sunken position; to his infinite delight he found the movement unaccompanied by the slightest twinge, and so, with a heart brim full of overflowing joy, he drew himself up to his full height without an ache or a pain; tall, muscular, and as straight as a tailor's yard.

The hurroo! that Terry sent forth from his invigorated lungs, when he felt the entire consciousness of his return to youth and its attendant freshness and strength, startled the echoes of the mountain, like the scream of a grey eagle.

"And now, Misther Terry Magra," said the leprechaun, "I may as well tell you the exact period of time that has transpired since I first had the pleasure of a conversation with you; it is now exactly, by my watch," and he pulled out a mite of a time-keeper from his fob—"there's nothing like being particular in matters of chronology—jist fourteen minutes and fifty-nine seconds, or to be more explicit, in another minute it will be precisely a quarter of an hour."

"Oh, murdher alive, only to think!" cried Terry, gasping for breath. "An' the wife an' childher, and the drunkenness and misery I scattered around me."

"Served but to show you, as in a vision, the sure consequences which would have resulted had you really been in possession of the coveted gift you merely dreamed that you had obtained; the life of wretchedness which you passed through, in so short a space of time, is but one of many equally unfortunate, some leading even to a more terrible close. There are a few, however, I am bound to say, on

whom earthly joys *appear* to shed a constant ray; but we, to whom their inmost thoughts are open as the gates of morning to the sun, know that those very thoughts are black as everlasting night."

"What say you now, Terry? Will you generously give up your power over me, and by leading a life of industry and temperance, insure for you and yours contentment, happiness, and comfort, or will you, to the quelling of my fairy existence and its boundless joys, risk the possession of so dangerous though dazzling a gift as I am compelled to bestow upon you, should you insist on my compliance with such a wish?"

It must be confessed that Terry's heart swelled again at the renewed prospect of sudden wealth, and inasmuch as he exhibited, by the puzzled expression of his countenance, the hidden thoughts that swayed, alternately, his good and evil impulses, the leprechaun continued—

"Take time to consider—do nothing rashly; but weigh well the consequences of each line of conduct, before you decide irrevocably and for ever."

"More power to you for givin' me that chance, any way," said Terry. "It wouldn't take me long to make my mind up, if it wasn't for what I've gone through; but, 'the burnt child,' you know, 'keeps away from the fire.' Might I ax, sir, how far you could go in the way of money? for, av I incline that way at all, bedad it won't be a peddlin shillin' that I'll be satisfied with."

"Do you know Squire Moriarty?" said the fairy.

'Is it Black Pether? who doesn't know the dirty thief of the world? Why, ould Bluebeard was a suckin' babby compared to him, in the regard of cruelty."

"How rich is he?"

"Be gorra, an' they say there's no countin' it, it's so thremendous. Isn't he the gripinest an' most stony-hearted landlord in the barony, as many a poor farmer knows, when rent day's to the fore?" said Terry.

"And how did he get his money?" inquired the leprechaun.

"Indeed, an' I b'lieve there's no tellin' exactly. Some says this way, an' others that. I've heard say that he was a slave marchint early in life, or a pirate, or something aiqually ginteel an' profitable," replied Terry.

"They lie, all of them," the little fellow went on. "He got it as you did yours, by a fairy gift, and see what it has made of him. In his early days, there was not a finer-hearted fellow to be found anywhere; everybody liked, courted, and loved him."

"That's thrue enough," said Terry, "and now there ain't a dog on his estates will wag a tail at him."

"Well, you may be as rich as he is, if you like, Terry," said the fairy.

"May I?" cried Terry, his eyes flashing fire at the idea.

"He turned his poor old mother out of doors, the other day," observed the leprechaun, quietly.

Terry's bright thoughts vanished in an instant, and

indignation took their place; for filial reverence is the first of Irish virtues. "The murdherin' Turk!" he exclaimed, angrily, "if I had a howld of him now, I'd squeeze the sowl out of his vagabone carcass, for disgracin' the counthry that's cursed with such an unnatural reprobate."

"It was the money that made him do it," said the fairy.

"You don't tell me that, sir!"

"Indeed but I do, Terry. When the love of *that* takes possession of a man's heart, there's no room there for any other thought. The nearest and dearest ties of blood, of friendship, and of kin, are loosed and cast away as worthless things. You have a mother, Terry?"

"I have, I have; may all good angels guard and keep her out of harm's way," cried Terry, earnestly, while the large tears gushed forth from his eyes. "Don't say another word," he went on, rapidly; "if it was goold mines that you could plant under every step I took, or that you could rain dimonds into my hat, an' there was the smallest chance of my heart's love sthrayin' from her, even the length of a fly's shadow, it's to the divil I'd pitch the whole bilin', soon an' suddent. So you can keep your grand gifts, an' yer fairy liberty, an' take my blessin' into the bargain, for showin' me the right road."

"You're right, Terry," said the leprechaun, joyously, "an' I'd be proud to shake hands with you if my fist was big enough. You have withstood temptation manfully, and sufficiently proved the kindliness of your disposition. I

know that this night's experience will not be lost on you, but that you will henceforth abandon the wild companionship in the midst of which you have hitherto wasted time and energy, forgetful of the great record yet to come, when each misused moment will stand registered against you."

"And now, Terry," he continued, "I'll leave you to take a little rest; after all you have gone through you must sorely need it." So saying, the leprechaun waved a slip of osier across Terry's eyelids, when they instantly closed with a snap, down he dropped all of a heap upon the springy moss, and slept as solid as a toad in a rock.

When Terry awoke, the morning was far advanced, and the sun was shining full in his face, so that the first impression that filled his mind was, that he was gazing upon a world of fire. He soon mastered that thought, however, and then, sitting down upon the famous stone, began to collect his somewhat entangled faculties into an intelligible focus. Slowly the events of the night passed before him; the locality of each phase in his adventures was plainly distinguishable from where he sat. There, close to him, was the identical branch on which had perched the legion of little pipers; a short distance from him was the mazy hollow through which he had so singularly forced his way; half hoping to find some evidence of the apparently vivid facts that he had witnessed, he put his hand into his breeches pocket, but only fished out a piece of pig-tail tobacco.

As he ran over every well-remembered circumstance, he

became still more puzzled. It was clear enough that he had been asleep, as he had but just woke up; but then he was equally certain that he was wide awake when the leprechaun touched his eyelids with the osier. Indeed, he looked round in the expectation of seeing it lying somewhere about; but there was no trace of such a thing.

The conclusion he came to was a characteristic one. "By the mortial," said he, as, taking up his pipes, he sauntered down the mountain-road, "there's somethin' quare in it, sure enough; but it's beyant my comprehendin'. The divil a use is there in botherin' my brains about it; all I know is, that there's a mighty extensive hive o' bees singin' songs inside of my hat this blessed mornin'. I must, put some whisky in an' drownd out the noisy varmints."

The chronicler of this veracious history regrets exceedingly that he cannot, with any regard to the strict truth, bring it to a conclusion in the usual moral-pointing style, except in its general tendency, which he humbly considers to be wholesome and suggestive; but the hero of the tale —the good-for-nothing, wild roysterer, Terry, who ought, of course, to have profited by the lesson he had received and to have become a sober, steady, useful, somewhat bilious, but in every way respectable, member of society, dressed in solemn black, and petted religiously by extatical elderly ladies, did not assist the conventional denouement in the remotest degree. With grief I am compelled to record the humiliating fact, that Terry waxed wilder than ever, drank deeper, frolicked longer, and kicked up more pro-

miscuous shindies than before, and invariably wound up the account of his fairy adventures, which in process of time he believed in most implicitly, by exclaiming:

"What a murdherin' fool I was not to take the money."

THE END.

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